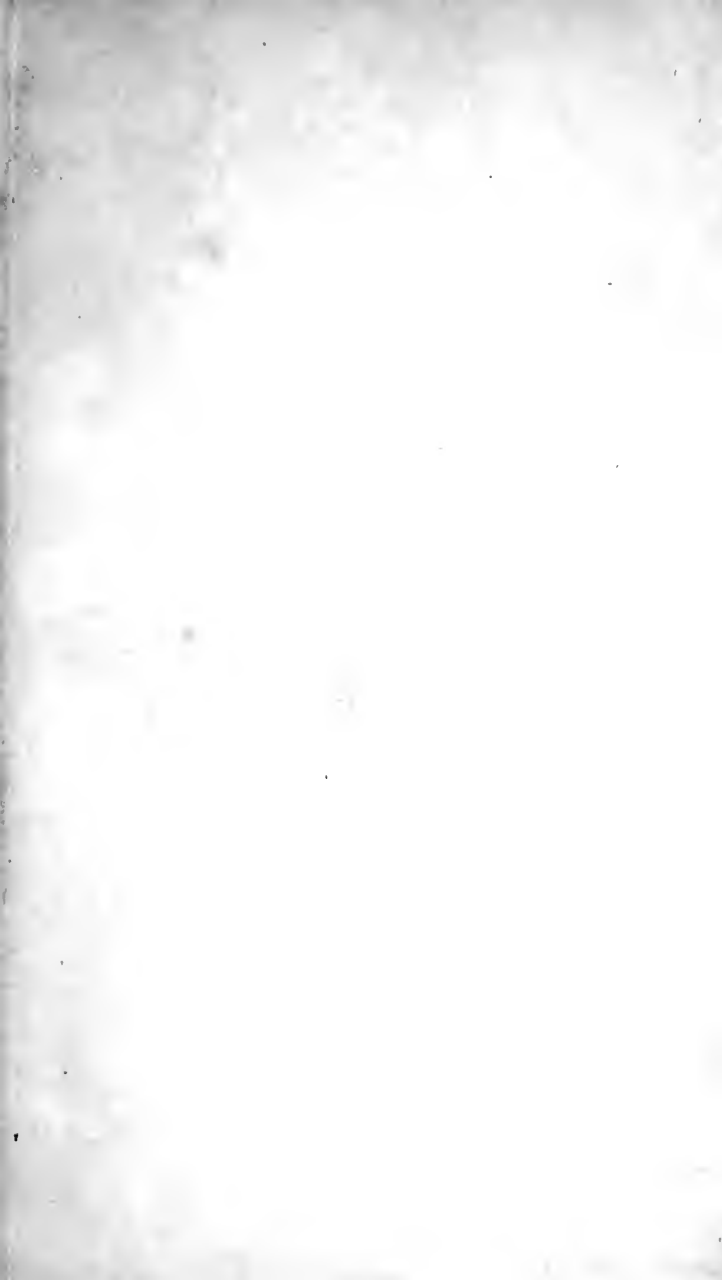


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LA SECCHIA RAPITA ;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET :

AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM,

IN TWELVE CANTOS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN

OF

ALESSANDRO TASSONI.

WITH NOTES.

BY JAMES ATKINSON, ESQ.

TWO VOLUMES.

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P R E F A C E.

ALESSANDRO TASSONI, the author of *La Secchia Rapita*, was the descendant of an ancient and noble Modenese family, and born on the 28th of September, 1565. For the acquirement of the Greek and Latin languages, he was placed under the tuition of Lazzaro Labadini, and his education was afterwards completed under eminent scholars at Bologna and Ferrara. He appears to have been at an early age of a lively imagination, with a strong turn for ridicule and satire. He belonged to the *Accademia degli Umoristi*, of Rome, and published his *Pensieri Diversi* in 1612, a work extremely severe on the literati of that time. He also composed a critical dissertation on the merits of Homer, and collected about five hundred passages to show their repugnance to common sense and propriety. Aristotle also fell under his censure, and in all his writings he manifested great science and learning.

always facetious and powerful in argument. His attack on Petrarch was answered with great spirit by a young man named Giuseppe Aromatarj in his *Riposte alle Considerazioni del Tassoni*. Tassoni replied in his *Avvertimenti*, under the name of *Crescenzio Pepe*. Aromatarj took the field again in his *Dialoghi*, under the name of *Falcidio Melampodio*, and Tassoni, under that of *Girolamo Nomisenti*, wrote, in vindication of his opinions, his *Tenda Rossa*, full of asperity and bitterness against his adversary, which terminated the dispute. The fame of Petrarch, however, has received no shock from this controversy.

In the beginning of 1597 he went to Rome, and was employed by the Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, with whom in 1600 he proceeded to Spain, in a diplomatic capacity. About this time he wrote his celebrated *Considerazioni sopra le Rime del Petrarca*, in which he is said to have omitted nothing that had any tendency to depreciate, and turn into ridicule the Florentine bard.

Cardinal Colonna died in 1608, which deprived Tassoni of employment.

In 1613 he was introduced to the service of the Duke of Savoy, Carlo Emanuele 1st, and from his sentiments and principles was supposed to be the author of *le Filippiche* against Spain, and of a book entitled *Esequie della Monarchia di Spagna*. In 1623 he re-

tired from active life, and passed three years tranquilly in the cultivation of letters, and in pursuits most congenial to his mind. In this retirement it is conjectured that he composed and finished his compendium of Baronius's Ecclesiastical History, extending from the birth of Christ to the fifteenth century. In 1626 fortune again smiled upon him, and he was taken into the service of Cardinal Lodovisio, nephew of Gregory XV. with a stipend of 400 crowns, and apartments in the Palace. After the death of that Cardinal, which took place in 1632, he was received by Duke Francesco I. his natural Sovereign, on honourable terms, with the title of counsellor, and accommodations at court. But he only enjoyed this new dignity about three years. He died at Modena on the 25th of April, 1635, and was buried in St. Peter's. Tassoni had thus nearly attained his 70th year.

The *Secchia Rapita*, according to Gaspare Salviani, was written by Alessandro Tassoni, In 1611. It was commenced upon in April, and finished in the October following, but subsequently augmented and improved. It was long circulated among friends in manuscript, and first published at Paris, in 1622, under the feigned name of Androvinci Melisone. It was originally entitled *La Secchia*, and afterwards received the adjunct of *Rapita*. This poem is perhaps most generally

known by name as the model upon which the Rape of the Lock of Pope, and the Lutrin of Boileau are conceived and written, although that conclusion has been evidently formed without sufficient consideration. They are all certainly of the mock-heroic description, but with that exception, there is little of similarity among them. The *Secchia Rapita* indeed differs essentially from the Rape of the Lock, both in spirit, and execution. There is nothing in the latter that can be compared with the humour of the former, or with the admirably grotesque pictures with which it abounds. All three are professedly intended to show,

What mighty contests rise from trivial things,

but this seems to be the chief point of coincidence.

Homer's *Batrachomyomachia*, or Battle of the Frogs and Mice, appears to have a much more legitimate claim to be considered the great ancestor of the family of that species of writing.

Tassoni himself, in the 23rd Stanza of the Fifth Canto, thus refers to the *Batracomyomachia*.

Musa tu, che cantasti i fatti egregi
 Del Re de' Topi, e de le Rane antiche,
 Sì, che ne sono ancor fioriti i fregi
 La per le piagge d' Elicona apriche,—
 Tu dimmi i nomi, &c.

Muse! thou who sang the memorable deeds
Of the Mouse-King, and gallant Frogs of yore;
So that they still through Heliconian meads,
Bloom with the same fresh beauty as before,—
Narrate, &c.

The *Batracomyomachia* is certainly the most ancient burlesque performance we are acquainted with. The irony is grave and solemn, and the subject highly ludicrous. Parnell has made a very good translation of the poem, but, as Goldsmith observes, the Greek names have not in English their original effect. It would have been difficult, however, to have translated and adapted in English metre, *Crambophagus*, a cabbage eater; *Polyphonus*, a great babbler; *Prassophagus*, an eater of garlic; *Troxartas*, a bread eater; *Pternotractas*, a bacon eater; *Tyroglyphus*, a cheese scooper, &c. A similar difficulty exists with regard to Tassoni's Poem, many of the names having a humorous signification and application, which cannot be well preserved in another language.

But the most masterly production of any age or nation; the most magnificent effort of human genius, in the walk of literature under consideration, is the *Don Quixote* of Cervantes. The narrative is so admirably conducted, the episodes are so strikingly beautiful, and the humour throughout so pertinent and irresistible that we look in vain for its parallel as a

whole in any language. Nothing can surpass the judgment displayed in the outline and colouring of the great hero. Whatever be his extravagance he never loses our regard. He has a charmed life, and in every adventure preserves our affection. Who is there, with any relish for wit and humour, that is not in love with the inimitable Knight and his Squire? There is not a country in the civilized world where it has not been read with the most unqualified gratification and delight. It is true that Don Quixote is not a poem; but it is written with all the richness of fancy, and the creative imagination of a genuine poet.

But we must return to Tassoni. The war between Modena and Bologna, which forms the subject of the *Secchia Rapita*, occurred in the year 1249. The particulars are thus narrated by Sismondi in the third volume of his *Histoire des Republiques Italiennes du Moyen Age*.

The Bolognese army had advanced successively against Faenza, Bagnacavallo, Forlimpopoli, Forli, and Cervia. All these towns, which were but weakly attached to the Ghibelline party, renounced them on the appearance of superior forces, and swore fidelity to the Church, rallying themselves with the Bolognese.

The following year the Cardinal di Ubaldini renewed his solicitations with the republic to engage it to carry on the war with vigour, and to profit by the

weakness of the imperials. Henzius, the natural son of Frederic, whom he had declared king of Sardinia, and his vicar in Lombardy, had not any considerable forces under his command. Although the towns of Modena and Reggio were the only ones which were immediately confided to his care, he could not prevent the rebellion of several of their castles, which declared for the Guelfic party. The Bolognese were determined to make the strongest efforts, and sent to offer to the Marquis d' Este the office of Captain-General of their troops. This nobleman being ill, he did not accept the offer, but in gratitude sent 3,000 horse, and 2,000 foot to join the Bolognese army. The army was composed of a thousand horse, 800 armed men, and three detachments from Porta Stieri, Porta S. Procolo, and Porta Ravennana. This army went out in beautiful order, preceded by the Carrocio, and commanded by the Prætor Filippe Ugone, and by the Cardinal Ottaviano di Ubaldini—they left garrisons in the principal castles of Castel-franco, Crevalcore, and Nonantola, advancing as far as the banks of the river Panaro. The Modenese, on their part, had implored the immediate assistance of king Henzius, who assembled all the Germans and Neapolitans his father had left him; the militia of Reggio and Cremona; and the emigrants of Parma, Plaisance, and other Guelfic towns, forming an army of 15,000 men. He hoped to have arrived

in time to prevent the Bolognese from passing the Panaro, a large river which runs within three miles of Modena; but when he reached the torrent of the Fossalta, which is two miles from it, he learnt that the Bolognese had taken the bridge of St. Ambroise, and had passed the river. The two armies being no longer separated by any river, remained some days together without venturing upon an attack.

As soon as the Senate of Bologna was informed of this, two thousand men were ordered to march, and instructions sent to the Prætor to give battle the next day. Accordingly on the 26th of May, the feast of St. Augustin, at break of day, the Bolognese began by a movement to the left, so as to turn the enemy, in taking the way of the Apennines. Henzius hastened his march to encounter them. He had formed his army into two *corps de bataille*, and one of reserve; in each of the first he had placed half of his German soldiers in whom he had most confidence, to support the Italians who were found among them. The reserve was composed of Modenese troops. On the other side, the Prætor of Bologna formed his army into four corps. The battle was maintained by him till night with equal ardour and advantage. Henzius had a horse killed under him, but, before he could be taken prisoner, his Germans surrounded him, and procured for him another charger. However, when night

came, the Ghibellines were forced to yield, and their order of battle broken. They were pursued in the dark—many of them perished by the swords of the enemy, and many others, wandering in a country intersected by deep canals, were separated from their friends and taken prisoners. This was also the misfortune of Henzius himself; of Buoso de Doara, a nobleman, who was beginning to make himself powerful at Cremona, and of a multitude of gentlemen and citizens of Modena. The Prætor did not wish to run the risk of having a prisoner of such importance as Henzius taken away from him by any reverse of fortune, and therefore immediately prepared to conduct him to Bologna. When he arrived before the Castle di Anzola he was met by some Bolognese troops as a mark of honour. From thence to the gates of the city he passed through an immense crowd, which hastened to witness this new triumph.

Henzius shone conspicuous amidst the prisoners; the son of a powerful Emperor—himself wearing a crown, and calculated from other causes to excite attention, and feelings of commiseration. He was scarcely twenty-five years of age—his hair, of a golden fairness, fell to his waist, in elegance of form he surpassed all the other prisoners, amongst whom he walked; and upon his countenance, which was of a sickly beauty, his misfortunes were strongly depicted. Great indeed

were his misfortunes, for the Bolognese Senate made a law, which was confirmed by the people, to forbid king Henzius from ever being liberated, whatever ransom might be offered by the father, or whatever menace might be employed. At the same time the republic entered into an engagement to provide nobly for their illustrious prisoner to the end of his days, and one of the most sumptuous apartments in the Podestate was destined to his use. During the remainder of his life, which was prolonged to twenty-two years, the Bolognese noblemen visited him every day, to take part in his games, and to afford him amusement, although they refused with unalterable firmness the offers of Frederic who would have bought him at any price. His menaces were equally despised.

After the Bolognese Prætor had placed the prisoner he had just taken in safety, he gave several weeks of repose to his army. At length towards the end of September, he conducted it again to the territories of the Modenese, whilst the Parmesans, who were on his side, attacked the town of Reggio, so that these two Ghibelline cities could not defend each other. The Modenese republic was much weaker than the Bolognese, and the defeat of Henzius, and the discouragement of Frederic, announced plainly enough that the Modenese could expect no succour, but from themselves. They shut themselves up within their walls, and ap-

peared for a long time indifferent to the ruin of their provinces,—and to the devastations of the Guelfic army, which was encamped at the foot of their ramparts. The Bolognese were at length only brought to take the field by an insult, which appeared at that time of so grave a nature, that all the historians of the age advert to it. With a catapult, they threw into the midst of the town, the carcase of a dead ass, to which they had attached silver chains. This ass fell into the most beautiful fountain of the town. The Modenese thought that after such an effort they could not longer remain shut up within their walls. They made a sortie, and indignation redoubled their valour—they penetrated the ranks of the besiegers, and got to the fatal machine with which they had been insulted. They tore it to pieces, and re-entered their city in triumph.

They notwithstanding showed themselves perfectly ready to enter into negotiations, when shortly after the besiegers offered them honourable terms. The treaty was proposed on the 7th of December, and peace concluded between the two belligerents on the 19th of January, 1250.

So far Sismondi. The wooden bucket, which is said to have occasioned the war, is still preserved among the archives of the Cathedral of Modena; suspended from the vaulted roof of the room, with an iron chain, which, it is further stated, served to fasten up the gate

of Bologna through which the Modenese entered the city, when they triumphantly carried off the prize. The main business of the poem is thus ascertained to be founded on history ; but the characters which figure on the scene are chiefly the contemporaries of the author. The immediate object Tassoni had in view, when he composed the *Secchia Rapita*, has not been distinctly handed down to posterity. Some have inferred, from the spirit of the satire which runs through the poem, that he adopted the story simply for the purpose of overcoming and crushing by the force of wit and ridicule, his literary rivals and enemies ; others conceive that he had a higher object, and that, execrating the tyranny of the foreign rulers of Italy, he wished to show, under the cover of a burlesque poem, to what public misery and ruin their influence and interference invariably led. It is not likely, however, that Tassoni had such enlarged views ; for in his time men's minds were absorbed by factions, and the ever-reviving jealousies of petty states. Whilst this system of separate governments lasted, every independent province was solely intent upon its own advantage and interests, and consequently utterly regardless of the good of the whole. It is more probable, therefore, that the result of the war in 1249, in which a wooden bucket was the only prize, presented a subject too ludicrous, and too susceptible of burlesque embellish-

ment for a mind like Tassoni's, so opulent in wit and humour, to forego. An opportunity was also conveniently offered of commemorating his friends and enemies, and he has introduced them into the poem, without the least reserve, and often without due discrimination. Some of his friends are treated with very little ceremony; indeed, the ridiculous seems to have taken such strong possession of Tassoni's fancy, that friend and foe were to him equally the subject of joke and merriment.

The poem is written with great felicity of expression, and there are fine examples in it of almost every species of composition. Many of the descriptive passages are exquisitely touched, many passages are extremely grand, and there are many beautiful specimens of the pathetic. Yet humour is the pervading quality. It is mixed up with admirable effect in every Canto, and sparkles through every scene of the amusing story.

In the Italian edition, it is said that a French translation of the *Secchia Rapita* was published by Mons. Perrault in 1678. It is also said that an English version of the poem has been published, but the present translator has seen neither one nor the other. The only part he has seen in an English dress consists of two stanzas quoted in an excellent article on the Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians; *Quarterly Review*, vol. 21, pp. 507, 508. The first bears the name of

M. M. Clifford, and the second, Ozell, and both in the heroic couplet. The only two copies of the original he has been able to meet with in Calcutta are Venice editions, of 1747 and 1813, which vary, though in a slight degree, and from these the following translation has been made.

To the Italian reader it will be superfluous to point out in how many places the translator has softened down the original, and modified the turn of thought,—and to the English reader it is unnecessary to enumerate them. Tassoni, however, requires the pruning knife much less than Ariosto.

Calcutta, April, 1824.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

*Led by two chiefs the Bolognese invade
Panaro's plains, intent on spoliation;
Some by Gherard are hurled among the dead,
Some by the Potta put in consternation.
The Bolognese are driven back dismayed,
Within their gates by Manfred,—desperation!
He combats for a Bucket in the town,
Takes it, and hastens home,—the prize his own.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

FAIN would I sing that direful wrath which swayed
Men's bosoms for a BUCKET, spoil renowned !
Stolen from Bologna, and in pomp displayed
By hostile Modenese with conquest crowned.⁽¹⁾
Phœbus ! the conflicts, and adventures dread,
Of horrid War, assist me to resound.
Inspiring God, till I am grown acuter,
Lend me thy helping hand, and be my tutor ;

II.

And thou, the Nephew of the Pope of Rome !⁽²⁾
And of the generous Carlo, son the second ;
Thou, who hadst wisdom in thy youthful bloom,
In tender years of high endowments reckoned ;
From studies deep, in which thou 'rt quite at home,
If thou canst turn, by Recreation beckoned ;
List to my song ; see here the Grecian Helen,
Transform'd into a BUCKET, War compelling !

III.

Now had the Roman Eagle lost his sway,
With talons broken all his power had ceased,
Which had been terrible for many a day,
Beyond the British Isles, and in the East ;
The Italian Cities now inglorious lay,
Caring not for his perilous state the least ;
No more to honourable deeds exciting,
But like young colts cast loose, kicking and biting.

IV.

Save the bold Adriatic's sovereign ;⁽³⁾ she
In Eastern climes and provinces had fought ;
From the discordant brawls of others free,
Deeply revolving high designs, she brought
Impious usurpers low to bend the knee,
Whom Greece obeyed, reducing them to nought ;
The others frisked at feasts, and to the sound
Of bells despoiled the villages around.

V.

Some of them, Ghibellines, enjoyed the aid
Of Austria's Emperor, for a selfish view,
Some of them Guelphs, leagued with the Church, which fed
With hope and promise, nothing rare or new ;⁽⁴⁾
But so it happened—desperate feuds had bred
Between two rival provinces which drew
That conflict on stupendous, full of glory,
Which is recorded in Parnassian story.

VI.

The Sun has passed through Aries, and now pours
Upon the silver clouds his rays divine ;
The fields seem full of stars, the heavens of flowers,
And the winds sleep along the tranquil brine ;
Zephyr alone breathes softly through the bowers,
And balmy herbs and tendrils of the vine ;
At dawn the nightingales delight the grove,
And asses bray their madrigals of love.

VII.

What time the Spring, with genial warmth endued,
Makes grasshoppers leap joyous in the meads ;⁽⁵⁾
Suddenly clad in arms a multitude
Of Bolognese, to predatory deeds,
Led by two chiefs, move on ; insulting, rude ;
This band by sweet Panaro's stream proceeds ;
Passes the ford, and with the morning light
Modena gains midst tumult and affright.

VIII.

Modena stands upon a spacious plain,
Hemmed in by ridges to the south and west,
And rugged fragments of the lofty chain
Of Appenine, whose elevated crest
Sees the last sunbeam in the western main,
Glittering and fading on its rippling breast ;
And on the top with ice eternal crowned,
The sky seems bending in repose profound.

IX.

The flowery banks where beautifully flow
Panaro's limpid waters, eastward lie ;
In front Bologna, and the left the Po,
Where Phaeton tumbled headlong from the sky ;
North, Secchia's rapid stream is seen to go,
With changeful course, in whirling eddies by,
Bursting the shores, and with unfruitful sand
Sowing the meadows and adjacent land.

X.

Then, like the Spartans lived the Modenese⁽⁶⁾
Unfortified, without a parapet ;
So shallow were the fosses that with ease
Men might run in and out early or late ;
The Great Bell's toll now echoed on the breeze,
And up from bed jumped all the people straight ;
Summoned to arm, some bolted quick down stairs,
Some to the windows rushed, and some to—prayers.⁽⁷⁾

XI.

Some snatched a shoe and slipper, some in haste
Had only one leg stockinged, others again
In petticoats turned inside out were dressed—
Lovers exchanged their shirts ; some with disdain,
Took frying pans for shields, and forward prest
With buckets on for helms, others were fain
To brandish hedge-bills, and in breastplates bright,
Ran swaggering to the Square—prepared for fight.

XII.

There had the Potta, ready at his post,
The City Standard valorously spread ;⁽⁸⁾
Himself on horseback armed, and he could boast
Bright scarlet breeches, shoes too, lively red ;
The Modenese abridging, to their cost,
Potestá, wrote but Potta, in its stead ;
And hence the Bolognese, in joke, had got a
Cognomen, and they called his Mayorship, Potta !

XIII.

Messer Lorenzo Scotti, sage and strong,⁽⁹⁾
Was Potta then, and suits at law decided ;
Now foot and horsemen, a promiscuous throng,
All hurry to the Square, and these divided,
Are posted at the gateways ; from among
The rest, a chosen squadron is confided
To Rangon's son, Gherardo,—to his hand
The Standard too is given and chief command.

XIV.

“ Go, valiant son,” he said, “ and curb the pride
“ Of these intolerable wretches, go !
“ But recollect, let not your strength be tried
“ Whilst we are separate, cope not with the foe ;
“ Stop short at the Fossalta, on each side⁽¹⁰⁾
“ Guard well the Pass, and cautious wait, for know
“ That, if I'm not mistaken, I shall soon
“ In arms be with you, probably ere noon.”

XV.

Now on his enterprize the Cavalier

Starts, with the flower of warriors, full of zeal,
And valiant martial spirits now appear

All stern, yet beautiful, and armed in steel;
A hundred damsels dressed in warlike gear,

Strengthen the squadron for the public weal;
With javelins in their hands, and helmets gleaming,
And robes succinct and pure around them streaming.

XVI.

Their gallant leader was Renoppia, young

And beautiful, a huntress used to arms,
From the same parents as Gherardo sprung,

Equal in valour, amidst wars alarms,
And courtesy; and it was said and sung

Through Italy, she was unmatched in charms;
Manly in action, yet her cheek's soft hue
Ravished all hearts, and terrified them too.

XVII.

Brown were her eyes and tresses, and the rose

And lily tinged her face, her bosom white
As ivory, ruby were her lips, and rows

Of pearl her teeth, in mind an angel bright;⁽¹¹⁾
But Maccabrum dall' Anguille sneering chose

A comment on that sonnet sweet to write,
Which runs "*This old, and bearded, spiteful croue,*"—
And said—she was as deaf as post or stone.

XVIII.

Now at the Square arriving she exclaimed :

- “ Signors, though feeble we may yet have art
“ And strength to keep the gates, or hold unblamed
“ The Passes, acting thus a gallant part ;
“ My fair compeers by valour all inflamed,
“ Are ready to risk death by sword or dart ;
“ Nor is it unbecoming well-born maid,
“ Her country to defend, when cruel foes invade.

XIX.

- “ When Barbarossa wrapt in flames Milan,⁽¹²⁾
“ That day, my grandsire won this ancient mail,
“ My brother locked it up, prudential man,
“ But all his cautious means were doomed to fail ;
“ We ’ve got the treasure, and what courage can
“ Perform, our foes shall witness to their bale.
“ If they approach, their wounds and death shall prove
“ The spirit and ardor which our bosoms move !”

XX.

The Damsel’s words, magnanimous, excite

- In every heart a generous disdain ;
And now the youths all burning for the fight,
Rush out in arms and seek the dusty plain ;
But worthy of himself, and always right !

- The Potta proudly calls them back again,
“ Whither so fast, ye dolts ! whither, I say, ⁽¹³⁾
“ Scampering without discipline or array.

XXI.

“ Perhaps you think there ’s waiting for you, wine,
“ Ice-cold, and pies all ready for regaling;
“ Dress yourselves quick, ye foolish men ! in line,
“ Feeders at others’ cost, ye are unfailing.”
Thus he reproached, with laudable design,
And put them into order. Luck prevailing,
The brave Gherardo reached his destination,
In time just suited to the great occasion.

XXII.

For rough Bordoecchio Balzan, who directed
The enemy’s first battalions, had got there
Before him, and his awkward force collected,
Under the Barrier-tower ; with watchful care
The Tower-men broke the drawbridge which protected
One flank, and shut the Pass—whizzing in air,
Arrows and darts and missiles, now they throw,
From battlement and window on the foe.

XXIII.

The Captain of the Bolognese brigade,⁽¹⁾
Who was a hero, muscular and fat,
Roared to his people, seemingly afraid,
Unable to proceed—“ What are you at !
“ Push forward, merrily, and undismayed ;
“ Leap o’er the foss, and we shall have them, pat !
“ Or, want ye to skulk back, in quest of forage ;
“ On, on, ye ’re full of hog-wash and not courage !”

XXIV.

Thus spoke he, when behold with dauntless mien
He saw Gherardo coming ; sharply moving
Well to the right, a goodly space between
Leaving, at once superior caution proving ;
And trusting to his friends, whose drums unseen
Were heard distinctly—and not danger loving,
Slunk from the bank—with all his men of might,
Weary with marching all the blessed night.

XXV.

Gherardo then—" My valorous souls, behold !
" How God confounds these silly ones,—they hear
" The drums of their companions, just as bold,
" Who still are on Panaro's banks—but ere
" Those join them let our courage uncontrolled
" Extinguish these, fatigued and pressed with fear ;
" Quick, follow me ; amidst the shallow ford,
" I'll cut my path-way with my breast and sword."

XXVI.

He said, and spurred his charger, where the rage
Of contest seemed the hottest, where it blazed ;
Dashing among the waters to engage ;
Aloft his glittering sword he firmly raised ;
Not Captain Curzio did such battle wage ⁽¹⁵⁾
At Lisbon, or in Flanders, as amazed
The Sipas, when Gherardo broke their ranks,
Thundering between the river's trampled banks.

XXVII.

He killed poor Bertoletto, squab and thick;
Once Roman procurator, he had hied
To recreate at Lino, but old Nick
Conducted him to battle, and he died;
Mastro Galasso too he slaughtered quick,
Dentist expert, and mountebank beside.
Balls, powders, trusses, he disposed of, bawling,
Better for him had he not changed his calling.

XXVIII.

Cesar Vian was left without a nose,⁽¹⁶⁾
Brother of the Podest' of Medicina,
And a sharp arrow gave a fatal dose
To the unlucky son of Doctor Guaina;
A waggish shaver then was shaven close,
The dexterous Barbier di Crespellina.
Then Mastro Constantin, surnamed Maglitte,
Famous for making bird-traps—rather pretty.

XXIX.

A wight facetious of the Zambeccari,
Gave him a blow upon the belly band;
At the same time Gian-Petron Scadinari
Slit up his breeches with his lance in hand;
But brave Gherardo not disposed to tarry,
Soon laid the assailants weltering on the sand,
Having cut off their caputs, clean and neat,
And seen them trunkless rolling at his feet.

XXX.

As erst Achilles on the Xanthus stood,
And swelled its sacred waves with Trojans slain ;
Or bold Hippomedon, made red with blood ⁽¹⁷⁾
Asopus' banks, in that renowned campaign,
Against the Theban Cities : so the flood
By the fierce Youth received a crimson stain ;
But, so innumerable those each party slew,
The Muse can but immortalize a few.

XXXI.

The host of Chiù Zambon of Moscadello,
Spread where he passed a most tremendous ruin ;
A blowzy-haired-assassin-looking fellow,
Without a helm or cap, a fearful Bruin ;
He soon encountered Sabatin Brunello,
Sausage-inventor, who, his trade pursuing,
Chopped off the blowzy head, and cleared a passage,
With the huge chopping knife that chopped up sausage.

XXXII.

Meantime Bordocchio had crossed o'er the river,
Surmounting all impediments at last ;
When from the Tower Gherardo, watchful ever,
Heard that the Potta was approaching fast.
Bordocchio this perceiving, his endeavour
Was to turn back, but wheeling round in haste,
Down fell his charger floundering in the flood,
And he was taken prisoner—smeared with mud.

XXXIII.

All those that previously had got across,
Were killed by brave Gherardo, those behind
Quickly were routed with prodigious loss;
Too late convinced of council bad and blind,
When to their aid they saw in column close,
Their friends all speedful through the meadows wind;
These to the left bank were in passing slow,
Because the stream had there a deeper flow.

XXXIV.

Giammaria de la Grascia, cunning knave,
Was Captain of that squadron, and desecring
Bordocchio's corps defeated, thought to save
The remnant, pusillanimously flying,
Whose blood distained the ground—with aspect grave,
He censured them, the harshest terms employing,
And pushing forward like a furious Roman,
Made a tremendous slaughter of the foe-men.

XXXV.

Radaldo Ganaceti, to protect
The passage, manned the bridge, but he was thrown
Precipitately downward, broken-necked,
Charger and all, and drowned—the bottom stone
Became his grave—Gherardo to direct
New succours for defence were moving on,—
When, lo! to sounds of echoing horns and drums,
And trumpet-clang, the glorious Potta comes.

XXXVI.

The Enemy closed up and retrograded,
By such a martial clangor terrified ;
But brave Gherardo all their ranks invaded,
Aspiring, for it was his valour's pride,
To route *two armies*, right and left he waded,
Midst blood and carnage and destruction wide ;
Broken his sword, and bristling on his shield
A hundred darts, he fought against the field.

XXXVII.

His head half naked—from his saddle bow
He drew his iron mace, and killed outright
Fantin Vizzan, Castelli Prospero,
Astor, Bianchi, Martin, him with bright
Cuirass, and helm, and shield, a warrior-beau ;
These trophies gilt, he seized on as his right,
To deck himself—but truly 'twas a shame,
To kill such gentlemen of noble name.

XXXVIII.

Meanwhile the Potta his first squadron pushed,
To reinforce his people in a flurry,
And he himself towards the bridge-work rushed
Where aid was most demanded, hurry skurry
He rode upon a mule, with valour flushed,
Snorting and kicking, as with fighting merry ;
When Grascia by a cruel javelin wounded,
Retired from battle desperately astounded.

XXXIX.

Now when the Bolognese, of battle shy,

Saw one poor Captain wounded, and another
Made captive—fortune going all awry,

Those valorous men could not their feelings smother ;
Though self-called heroes off they run—they fly,

No waiting for command in such a pother ;
Some on their horses scampering, some light-heel'd
On foot, quit rapidly the fatal field.

XL.

But swiftly with a bill-hook swinging round,

The Potta, like a demon, forward darted ;
And stretched so many lifeless on the ground,

That Heaven became through pity tender hearted ;
The River, so increased with blood, was found

Crimson for several days and heat imparted.
Once it was called the Fiumicel, but ever
Since that, its name has been the Tepid River.

XLI.

All day, and all the long-live night were chased

The Bolognese, in miserable plight,
Covering the roads and fields. Manfredi traced ⁽¹⁸⁾

The fugitives, and urged a following light,
With horse three hundred, without halt, or rest,

But with such zeal and persevering might,
That when the morn removed night's dusky pall,
He found himself beneath the city wall.

XLII.

Open was thrown the San Felice gate,
By the good citizens in haste ; the din
And gathering crowd, and tumult were so great,
Victors and vanquished rolled impetuous in ;
Manfredi's men were not the men to wait,
They dashed, an arrow's flight, through thick and thin ;
And would have been shut up there, every mortal
Had he not called, and formed them at the Portal.

XLIII.

And Spinamont del Forno, Rolandino,
Savignan Aliprando d'Arrigozzo,
Denti da Balugola, Albertino,
Foschiera, Calatran di Borgomozzo,
Fatigued with heat and running, found within a
Short distance a Draw-well, they call a *Pozzo*,
And a new BUCKET made of fir, where first
They sat them down to quench their burning thirst.

XLIV.

The Pulley being broken, and the rope
Full of hard knots—the Well too rather deep,
Slow was the operation, slide and stop,
Jerking the BUCKET ; when with spring and leap,
(Scarcely had Rolandino got a drop)
The citizens rushed on them in a heap
From divers points, determined to environ
The group at once with swords of trusty iron.

XLV.

Young Scarabocchio, son of Pandragone,
Petronio Orso, Ruffin, and besides
Vianese Albergati, and Griflone,
Came screaming, " Kill them, kill them, homicides!"
But each of the assailed, on horse or poney
Soon springs, with shield and cuirass, and derides
The menace, grasping firmly his good blade
And bearing in his aspect " Who's afraid?"

XLVI.

And Spinamonte who the BUCKET took
To drink from, promptly threw the water out,
And cutting the long rope, fixed by a hook,
Used it against the circumambient rout;
In his left hand he held it up, and shook
His weapon in the right, tossing about;
By his compeers efficiently assisted,
The furious citizens he well resisted.

XLVII.

Now Aldrovandi and Ringhiera roared
Indignantly, " Besotted mob! give back
" That BUCKET, if not to the WELL restored,
" You shall repent it, faith, upon the rack!"
" Come on then!" cried Foschiera, " On my word
" You soon shall see how smartly we attack!"
He spoke, and without further pause,
Cut off adroitly poor Ringhiera's jaws.

XLVIII.

Not with more toil the beauteous Grecian dame,
 Some thousand years ago was borne away ;
 Nor did the battle of immortal fame
 For chaste Aristoclea wrath display ⁽¹⁹⁾
 Like this, for a vile BUCKET. What a shame !
 Carlon Cartari's dirk hath made its way
 Into Calatran's paunch —Carlon the vain,
 The sovereign hero of the Butcher-train.

XLIX.

And Rolandino by a blow well aimed,
 Napulion di Fazio deeply wounded :
 He too the hand of his opponent maimed,
 And had not brave Manfredi forward bounded
 To aid his friends, who all his courage claimed,
 Not one would have escaped. Like vessel grounded
 Great Balugola lay, his wounds all streaming,
 And tore his uvula with furious screaming.

L.

Manfredi at the gate his men collected,
 And checked the daring enemy in style ;
 Safe from the peril, as he had expected,
 He came triumphant, crossed the ford the while,
 And yet, upon his lance's point erected,
 The champion could not boast more noble spoil
 Than a poor wooden BUCKET, which though not a
 Prize of high worth, was destined for the Potta.

LI.

But to the Conqueror it was a token
Of high importance, for in open day
Bologna he had traversed, and had broken
The Enemy's force, and snatched the prize away,
To their disgrace eternal be it spoken.
The glorious news was sent without delay
To Modena, where it was soon decreed
Manfred should be much honoured for the deed.

LII.

Adam Boschetto⁽²⁰⁾ happened at that time
To be the city Bishop, and maintained
His varied flock from every sin and crime ;
His copy of the Bible was not stained,
Nor thumb'd—he seldom read its truths sublime ;
Hence all his people's reverence he obtained.
Matins and vespers were not his delight,
He gambled with his livings day and night.

LIII.

This Bishop, when he heard, with admiration,
His townsmen were triumphantly returning
With BUCKET won, amidst such desperation,
From people so renown'd, all danger spurning,—
He put himself in trim for gratulation,
To go and hail the Conqueror, concerning
The wonderous feat ; by all his priests attended,
Dressed in his festal robes, all vastly splendid

LIV.

A robe of scarlet cloth the Potta wore,
Superbly large, a black cap on his head ;
The edge of which was richly figured o'er
Half a palm broad contrasting well with red ;
The Ancients followed him, a reverend corps,
In gowns, and mounted—rather vilely sped ;
Lank were the mules as e'er met observation,
Looking the very picture of starvation.

LV.

An armed Page before the Potta trotted,
Bearing aloft the Shield and naked Sword ;
And on his right and left in pomp were noted
Two senior Ancients, not with wisdom stored.
The Standard of the people fluttering floated
In Villa Franca's hand, a youth adored
For being brave as Mars, and noble hearted,
And for bright eyes that love and joy imparted.

LVI.

Two troops of lancers—two of cuirassiers,
One in advance, the other close behind,
And Runners armed with staves (not swords or spears)
Kept off the mob, obstreperously inclined ;
Who were all hastening on the road with cheers,
Mad to St. Peter's neighbouring Gate, combined,
To see that BUCKET, source of such contentions,
Believing it a mountain in dimensions.

LVII.

And last came fifty country girls, all neat
And trim, in milk-white petticoats arrayed ;
With baskets, framed of osier, full of meat,
Bread, wine, and pastry rich, and marmalade,
Omlets, and hard boiled eggs, and jelly sweet,
For the exhausted warriors, who had made
Such havoc for the BUCKET: thus supplied,
To the Fossalta chattering loud they hied.

LVIII.

There they the Parish Priest on duty found,
Bestowing comfort on the agonized ;
Absolving all the guilt of all around,
With holiest zeal the sinners he advised ;
And if he saw a ring, or heard the sound
Of money in their purses, which he prized,
Fearing they might be robbed, with eager care
He put it in his fob and kept it there.

LIX.

Manfredi soon appeared, and bravely led
His squadron two by two triumphantly,
Before the Standard, beautifully spread,
Bold Spinamonte bore the BUCKET high,
Adorned with flowers and myrtle—grand parade ;
It was a spoil so glorious—rushing by,
The Potta quick the conquering chief embraced,
And his great joy in welcomes was expressed.

LX.

Then asked how he had strength and power to take
That BUCKET, how he was not killed outright;
And how the Bolognese had failed to make
Him prisoner, shamed and stung by such a slight.
Manfredi said:—"God, kindly for the sake
"Of those who trust in him, affords his might;
"The foe had two good feet to chase us—we
"Had four to scamper from them, as you see!"

LXI.

The country dames the warriors then invited
Upon the fresh grass of a flowery mead;
And, all being famished, with the treat delighted,
The whole was swallowed marvellous quick indeed.
The meal was finished, and the stomach righted,
Each hero forthwith, mounted on his steed,
Resumed the dusty march towards the Gate,
Thinking upon the slain, and mourning o'er their fate.

LXII.

Under the Gate the Bishop stood prepared
With holy-water-sprinklers, singing shrill
A laudatory anthem; in the yard
Of Poulterer, capens such sharp accents trill.
Manfred dismounting showed his high regard,
And bent both knees, due homage to fulfil;
And with him to the sound of trumpets went,
To render thanks to God and every Saint.

LXIII.

But the famed BUCKET promptly was secured
In the great Tower, there destined to remain ;
A trophy with religious care immured,
And fastened to the building by a chain ;
The Turret had five doors we are assured,
And every traveller is glad to gain,
When visiting Modena, for a while
A sight of this grand prize, this glorious spoil.

NOTES TO THE FIRST CANTO.

1.

By hostile Modenese with conquest crowned.

Stanza i.

In the original Tassoni calls the Bolognese, Petroni, and the Modenese, Gemignani, from the guardian saints of the respective cities, Petronius and Geminianus.

2.

And thou, the Nephew of the Pope of Rome.

Stanza ii.

This is D. Antonio Barberini, who was at that time cardinal, and twice legate of Bologna, that is, from 1629 to 1642. He was the son of Carlo Barberini, elder brother of Pope Urban the Eighth, and thence called by the author *Nipote del Rettor del Mondo*. He is called *ultimo Figlio*, because he had an elder brother named Francisco.

3.

Save the bold Adriatic's sovereign.

Stanza iv.

At that time the Republic of Venice was too much occupied by its conquests in the Greek Empire, to attend to the interests of Italy generally.

4.

*Some of them Guelphs, leagued with the Church, which fed
With hope and promise.*

Stanza v.

This line was originally, *ma non arcan dal Papa altro che messe*, but changed, as being a little too satirical on the Romish Church.

5.

*What time the Spring, with genial warmth ended,
Makes grasshoppers leap joyous in the meads.*

Stanza vii.

Grasshoppers, applied not only to indicate the season, but contemptuously to the Modenese youth.

6.

Then like the Spartans lived the Modenese.

Stanza x.

In early times Modena was surrounded by a wooden fence, but afterwards, from 1180, by a fosse and a wall. The poet is therefore not quite accurate,—he is however not writing a history, but a poem; this is the apology of the commentator Salviani. What is said of Sparta refers to the reply of the Spartan to one who adverted to the city having no walls: “The strongest wall is our courage.”

7.

Some to the windows rushed, and some to—prayers.

Stanza x.

Not to prayers in the original, but *pitale*, which means, quel vaso, in cui, standosi alla seggetto, si scaricano le fecie del corpo.

8.

The City Standard.

Stanza xii.

The impress of the City of Modena was *una trivella*, with the motto AVIA PERVIA. The Modenese were accustomed to write Potta for Podesta. This is not a capriccio of the poet, but founded on the *Chroniche del Lancilotto*. The meaning of the motto is thus explained by Paolo Mazzi.

Questa del Sangue, e del valor Romano
 I gloriosi semi anco riserba,
 Nell' opre dell' ingegno, e della mano
 Cettà saggia non men, ch' aspra, ed acerba.
 Ella in trofeo del suo poter sovrano,
 Due famose Trivelle erge superba;
 Per dir, ch' ogni erta, e faticosa strada
 Penetra col Consiglio, e colla Spada.

9.

Messer Lorenzo Scotti
Was Potta then.

Stanza xiii.

Here is figured the Count Lorenzo Scotti, a friend of the author. A vain purse-proud man is now often scornfully called *Potta di Modena*.

Line 8.—Gherardo, son of Rangone Rangoni, actually lived at that time, and according to the history of Campanaccio, and of Sigonio, he and Tommasin Gorzani were Captains of the Modenese people in this war, and were, along with King Enzo, taken prisoners.

10.

Stop short at the Fossalta.

Stanza xiv.

The Fossalta is the pass of a torrent between Modena and the river Panaro.

11.—Stanza xvii.

The first four lines a quiz on the poets, who always describe their innamoratas with ivory bosoms, ruby lips, and teeth of pearls.

12.

When Barbarossa wrapt in flames Milan.

Stanza xix.

The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa on the 25th of March 1162, ordered, after a tedious siege of Milan, the entire destruction of the city, and that the Milanese name should be effaced for ever! The city was actually destroyed.

13.

Whither so fast, ye dolls!

Stanza xx.

Thus Virgil in the XIIth Æneid :

Quo ruitis ? quæve ista repens discordia surgit ?

O cohibite iras.—

14.—Stanza xxiii.

The author in writing *Il Capitan della Petronia gente*, imitates Tasso in the 11th Canto.—*Il Capitan delle Christiane genti*.

15.

Not Captain Curzio.

Stanza xxvi.

Captain Curzio Saracinelli was a most brave man, but a great boaster ; he particularly distinguished himself in Flanders and Portugal.

Line 8.—Sipa is used in the text, by which the Bolognese are meant—*popoli dal Sipa*. Boccaccio, speaking of a Bolognese Doctor, says—*Che questo Maestro Sipa andava cercando*.

16.

Cæsar Vian was left without a nose.

Stanza xxviii.

This man was a Doctor without a nose.

Line 2.—Medicina is a place situated between Imola and Bologna. It had in ancient times a castle, which was pulled down by the Bolognese. In the *Inferno*, Dante says :

Rimembrili di Pier da Medicina.

17.

Or bold Hippomedon.

Stanza xxx.

Hippomedon was a most valorous Greek champion, who fought against the Thebans. His intrepidity is described in the ninth book of Statius.

18.

Manfredi traced

The fugitives.

Stanza xli.

Manfredi Pio was the head of the Ghibelline faction, and Imperial Vicar of that party.

19.

For chaste Aristoclea.

Stanza xlviii.

Aristoclea, a beautiful woman, seen naked by Strato, as she was offering a sacrifice. She was passionately loved by Calisthenes, and was equally admired by Strato. The two rivals so furiously contended for her hand that she died during their quarrel; upon which Strato killed himself, and Callisthenes was never seen after.—*Lempriere*.

20.

Adam Boschetto.

Stanza lii.

Bonadamo Boschetti was really Bishop of Modena at that period.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA ;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

*The Bolognese send twice Ambassadors
The Bucket to demand, but all in vain ;
Then War ensues ; each party calls his powers,
Armed for the strife, from mountain, dale, and plain ;
Jove holds a Council, as the conflict lowers.
Vulcan contends with Mars in high disdain ;
Venus retires, and, lovely from her birth,
With Mars and Bacchus lights upon the earth.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

FOUR days had passed since of their prowess proud,
Modena's chiefs the famous victory won;
And, from that conflict, still dead warriors strowed
The plain, unburied, stiffening in the sun,
To dogs a prey; when two mild envoys rode
Into the city and, their journey done,
Alighted at the Ram; then pausing stood,
And asked the keeper, if his wine was good.

II.

In order to secure a proper hearing,
A messenger was sent, and then ding-dong ⁽¹⁾
The great bell rang; the Senate soon appearing,
Fallopia Alessandro went along
With Gaspar Prato, both by duty steering,
For, not to honour envoys would be wrong;
And led them to the hall, once sweet with lavender,
But where the duke now keeps his stable provender.

III.

An old man, hoarse and smoke dried, shrivelled, pale,

Appearing starved in visage, lean, unfed,
Grinding his teeth for fear his breath should fail,

Who the lank part of Lazarus might have played ;
Twice looking round on all from crown to tail,

He then began his speech, and thus he said,
“ Masters, I am Marcel di Bolognino, ⁽²⁾
“ Doctor of laws, and eke Count Palatino.

IV.

“ My colleague is a Count, besides a knight, ⁽³⁾

“ Rodolf Campeggio is his honoured name ;

“ I am a man of peace, he used to fight ;

“ I love deep study, he a soldier’s fame ;

“ Hence we are sent, as messengers, to right

“ The errors just committed, which we blame ;

“ Our people have most grievously offended,

“ But you will pardon insults not intended.

V.

“ They are a set of demons, devils, faith !

“ Not to be held by bit and bridle, ever ;

“ And may good San Petronio speed my death

“ This moment, if ’tis false what I deliver ;

“ My colleague can bear witness with his breath

“ That, when the other night they passed the river,

“ Some impudent deceivers took the lead,

“ The Senate quite unconscious of the deed. ⁽⁴⁾

VI.

“ But there is no undoing what is done,
“ All are displeased that you have been annoyed ;
“ And we have come, for injuries to atone,
“ Our dead to ransom, peace to be enjoyed ;
“ But we must have the BUCKET, 'tis our own, '
“ *That* we must have, or all I've said is void ;
“ Your bold-faced people stole it, and if not
“ Returned, our anger will be desperate hot.”

VII.

Here Bolognino ceased his fine oration,
And all laughed out immoderately loud.
Then Rarabonè held the highest station ⁽⁵⁾
Upon the Bench, a doctor, sage and proud ;
Tassone was his other appellation,
He was so fat, and his short legs so bowed,
On him the Senate gave a speaking look—
He smoothed his chin, and thus the silence broke.

VIII.

“ That your illustrious senators have sent
“ Two men of such importance, and so wise,
“ Pardon to beg, and show that they repent
“ Past evils, motives which we dearly prize,
“ Is our good fortune ; and your names besprent
“ With honour shall our annals grace ; our eyes
“ Weep truly for your dead, whom God hath taken,
“ And for whose fate you seem with sorrow shaken.

IX.

- “ If to inter them you request permission,
 “ Your wishes shall be granted. If you come
 “ To offer peace to us with the condition
 “ That we give back the BUCKET—’tis a hum;
 “ Accounts must first be settled with precision,
 “ Since we are not accustomed to succumb.
 “ We stole the BUCKET! we! with valour teeming,
 “ Why, my good masters! you are surely dreaming.”

X.

- Manfredi, present at the altercation,
 Took off his cap and vehemently struck it;
 And, “ The wretch lies, and merits execration”—
 He cried, “ who says that I have stolen the Bucket?
 “ On horseback armed, mid day’s illumination,
 “ Full in the City-square, by force I took it;
 “ And if I like I’ll to the Well orbicular
 “ Return, and in it drop a perpendicular.

XI.

- “ You’re misinformed, as it appears to me,
 “ Master Marcello of a Bolognino.”⁽⁶⁾
 “ Most Excellent,” Campeggio said, “ I see
 “ That you are brave as any Paladino;
 “ Come, this is but a sleeveless errand, we
 “ Must measure back our pathway, or *cammino*;
 “ But, Senate, I protest in sober sadness,
 “ That you shall soon repent this silly madness.”

XII.

Manfred would have replied, and there had been
Scandalous doings if the Potta, rising,
Had not prevented the impending scene
With angry look, such conduct stigmatizing ;
“ Silence,” he said, “ vain fools ! in council green,
“ Know ye not then the ancient right ? surprising ;
“ Ambassadors have power at any season
“ To talk, and for their talk to give no reason.”

XIII.

So the ambassadors pursued their way
Back to Bologna, whence, no effort sparing,
Another on the third revolving day
Was sent, the learned Doctor Baldi, bearing⁽⁷⁾
Revised conditions, and empowered to say
A province should be given, the bargain squaring
For the lost Bucket : Baldi was regarded
With great distinction—so is worth rewarded.

XIV.

Again the Council sat, the following morning,
When he appeared in manner diplomatic ;
He was a man both old and shrewd, adorning
His speech with wit and flattery, spiced with attic ;
Yet to oppose the current always scorning.
“ Mirrors,” he said, with accent quite emphatic,
“ Mirrors of wisdom, patterns, how I glory
“ To be thus honoured, sitting here before ye !

XV.

- “ I come to offer terms unparalleled,
“ Terms that will raise your wonder ;—know there lies
“ An ancient province but by few excelled,
“ And marvellously favoured by the skies,
“ Close to your territory, distant held
“ From this some thirteen miles ; there by surprise ⁽⁸⁾
“ Pansa was killed ; and, therefore, says the story,
“ His friends through sorrow named it Grevalcore.

XVI.

- “ Still does the spot preserve, though centuries
“ Have passed away, the same denomination ;
“ Once full of bogs, and marsh impurities,
“ Now pleasant hill and dale : but cultivation
“ Has not yet dried up all the crevices,
“ And ponds, of stagnant water ; irrigation
“ Is good, and gutters left, to meet our wishes,
“ Are now inhabited by singing fishes.

XVII.

- “ The syrens of the ditches, numerous breed,
“ Slumber-inducing, marked with various hues ;
“ And the inhabitants of lake and mead
“ Perpetual summer with their songs diffuse ;
“ This seems the happy realm, of which we read,
“ Where time a race successively renews
“ So like in look and habit, we behold
“ A faithful symbol of the age of gold.

XVIII.

“ Now mark ! *this* province, so renowned and splendid,
“ Is yours, my country offers it through me,
“ If that same BUCKET, which our men defended,
“ The devil take them, so disgracefully ;
“ And which your people stole, when strangely blended
“ With ours they forced the Gate impetuously ;
“ If that same BUCKET is restored, I say,
“ Placed at the Well whence it was dragged away.

XIX.

“ But whilst good Fortune offers this exchange,
“ A province for a Bucket—recollect
“ That with her goddess-ship, 'tis nothing strange
“ To laugh at those who present time neglect ;
“ Lose but the golden moment, in revenge
“ You shall endure much more than you suspect ;
“ A long campaign, and tedious war, short commons,
“ For closely leagued with us will be the Romans.”

XX.

Here Baldi ceased ;—and then a whispering rose,
For there were none who ventured a reply :
But it appeared, from looks and knitted brows,
That all were dubious, thinking danger nigh ;
At last considering deeply friends and foes,
And perils hidden from the common eye :
They told good Doctor Baldi, the romancer,
That the next morning he should have an answer.

XXI.

The day arrived, and the exchange admitted,
The BUCKET should be given up—they said;
To *take* it any one might be permitted;
This contract was confirmed and duly read;
For the old senators would have committed
A crime had they implicitly obeyed:
And the Petronians if they e'er believed
They could to conquerors dictate, were deceived.

XXII.

Baldi apologized,—without authority
To alter the conditions just proposed;
And having no sufficient reason for it he
Wished to return, post haste, ere day had closed.
And, if the city by its great majority,
Approved the terms, he was so well disposed,
He 'd send a courier straight,—and, settled so,
Three days—the affair remained in statu quo.

XXIII.

On the third day, when all was expectation
That peace would be confirmed without demur,
Behold a courier came, to their vexation,
Upon a limping nag, with whip and spur,
And taking from his fob a proclamation,
Promptly affixed it to an ancient fir,
Or poplar, near the Gate, by their own Saint
Planted long since, with holiest intent.

XXIV.

“ The Bolognese,” thus ran the proclamation,
“ To war and death the Modenese defy ;
“ If in a month they make not restoration
“ Of the contested Bucket.” Clear on high
This notice hung ; and with precipitation
The courier trotted back, he wished to fly,
Flogging his tripod charger left and right, ⁽⁹⁾
And verily he soon was out of sight.

XXV.

As the keen fisherman who up a cleft
Thrusts his spread hand to draw a lobster out
Living, and finds a serpent, toad, or eel,
Or any noxious beast, begins to pout ;
So looked the Potta's people, half bereft
Of sense, indignant, it was past a doubt ;
Down fell their lower jaws at that protest,
Thinking to find them simpletons at best.

XXVI.

But as they were by nature proud, ambitious,
Hiding their motives with dissimulation ;
They laughed at this wild threat, to them malicious,
And boldly cared not for the proclamation.
The broken walls, for warfare unpropitious,
Were not repaired, nor ditches cleared—occasion
They did not see, to manifest submission,
Either to fortune's vagaries, or the foe's decision ;

XXVII.

But wrote to Frederic, Germany's great king
And emperor, soliciting his aid;
From populous plain and mountain high they bring
Recruits, and slyly muster them in shade.
A league they form, and hold as in a string
Parmegians, Cremonese, well fed and paid;⁽¹⁰⁾
And horse and foot are brought within the walls,
And earth resounds with pleasant feasts and balls.

XXVIII.

Fame, meanwhile, heavenward flapped her spreading
And bore the wondrous news to Jove's abode; [wings,
And to the sovereign told what mighty things
By wayward Fate had from a Bucket flowed;
Jove, who to human kind so loving clings,
And deeply feels their woes, a heavy load;
Orders the bells to ring at all the portals,
To call to solemn council the Immortals.

XXIX.

O'er rolling stars, from heavenly stalls advancing,⁽¹¹⁾
The coaches soon were seen, and a long train
Of mules with litters, horses fleet and prancing,
Their trappings all embroidery, nothing plain;
And with fine liveries, in the sun-beams glancing!
More than a hundred servants, rather vain
Of handsome looks, and of their stature tall,
Followed their masters to the Council Hall.

XXX.

First came the Prince of Delos, Phœbus hight,
In a gay travelling carriage, fleetly drawn
By six smart Spanish chesnuts, shining bright,
Which with their tramping shook the ærial lawn;
Red was his cloak, three cocked his hat, and light
Around his neck the golden fleece was thrown;
And twenty-four sweet damsels, nectar-sippers,
Were running near him in their pumps or slippers.

XXXI.

Pallas, with lovely but disdainful mien,
Came on a nag of Basignanian race;
Tight round her leg, and gathered up, was seen
Her gown half Greek, half Spanish; o'er her face
Part of her hair hung loose, a natural skreen,
Part was tied up, and with becoming grace;
A bunch of feathers on her head she wore,
And on her saddle bow her falchion bore.

XXXII.

The Paphian Queen for her accommodation
Had two state-coaches; richly decorated
Was that in which she sate in conversation
With Cupid and the Graces; on them waited
Pages in habits suited to their station,
The other coach, with courtiers gay was freighted.
The chamberlain and tutor, debonnaire,
And the chief cook, Dan Bacon, too, was there.

XXXIII.

Saturn was old and ill of a catarrh.

And just had taken physic ; therefore rightly
Came in a litter shut up from the air,

With vase beneath the cushion, fitting tightly.
On a fine charger came the God of War

Capering along, unusually sprightly.
His boots were scoloped, and his corslet leather,
And in his hat he wore a scarlet feather.

XXXIV.

But Ceres and the God of Wine appeared

At once, conversing ; and the God of Ocean
Upon a dolphin's back his form upreared,

Floating through waves of air with graceful motion ;
Naked, all sea-weed, and with mud besmeared ;

For whom the mother, Rhea, feels emotion,
Reproaching the proud brother, when she meets him,
Because so like a fisherman he treats him.

XXXV.

Diana, the sweet virgin, was not there ;

She had risen early, and o'er woodland green
Had gone to wash her clothes in fountain fair,

Upon the Tuscan shore—romantic scene.
And not returning till the northern star

Had rolled through dusky air and lost its sheen :
Her mother made excuses, quite provoking.
Knitting at the same time a worsted stocking.

XXXVI.

Juno-Lucina did not go, and why?

She anxious wished to wash her sacred head.

Menippo, Jove's chief taster, standing by,

For the disastrous Fates excuses made.

They had much tow to spin and lint to dry,

And they were also busy baking bread.

The cellarman, Silenus, kept away,

To water the domestics' wine that day.

XXXVII.

The everlasting gates of heaven expand,

The golden bolts and fastenings ring and shine;

The gods now from the court superb and grand,

Into the regal hall their steps incline;

Free from the touch of Time's cold withering hand,

The rich walls corruscate with gems divine;

The precious stones of India's diadem,

Lose all their value when compared to them.

XXXVIII.

On starry benches sit the famous warriors

Of the immortal kingdom, in a ring;

Now drums and cymbals, echoing to the barriers,

Announce the coming of the gorgeous King;

A hundred pages, valets, napkin-carriers

Attend, and their peculiar offerings bring.

And after them, armed with his club so hard,

Alcides, captain of the city guard.

XXXIX.

And as the madness which his brain affected
Was not quite cured, officiously he strode,
And swung aloft his club, and blows directed
Among the crowd to clear the royal road.
Like drunken Swiss he looked, and seemed connected
With ruffians low who hire themselves abroad
On festal days, before the pope to bluster,
Breaking of arms and skull-caps in a fluster.

XL.

With Jove's broad hat and spectacles arrived
The light-heeled Mercury; in his hand he bore
A sack in which, of other means deprived,
He crammed poor mortals' prayers, some million score;
These he dispensed in vessels, well contrived,
Which graced the father's cabinet of yore;
And, wont attention to all claims to pay,
He regularly signed them twice a day.

XLI.

Then Jove himself, in regal habit dressed,
With starry diadem upon his head,
And o'er his shoulders an imperial vest,
Worn upon holidays.—The King displayed
A sceptre, pastoral shape, with hooked crest;
In a rich jacket too he was arrayed,
Given by the inhabitants of Sericane,
And Ganymede held up his splendid train.

XLII.

At his approach from Ottomans supernal,
Up rose the immortal Senate, and bowed down
Their heads in reverence, till the Power Paternal,
Seated himself upon his gorgeous throne ;
Fortune was on the left of the Eternal,
By way of favour eminently shown ;
Destiny was on the right, and Time and Death ⁽¹²⁾
Served for his footstool, almost out of breath.

XLIII.

He turns, and looks—and instantly to rest ⁽¹³⁾
The breeze is hushed—the vaulted heaven 's serene—
The solid earth and ocean's ample breast
Tremble at his bland words, and what they mean ;
Beginning from the day when mice unblest,
And slaughtered frogs, throughout the world were seen
Innumerable ; and he told of battles dire
That happened in the moon ; of flood and fire.

XLIV.

“ Now,” said he, “ battle deadlier is at hand,
“ Between the Sipa and the Potta states ;
“ You know the ancient grudge on which they stand,
“ How often they have broke each other's pates ;
“ But now a Bucket sharpens every brand,
“ And, if not checked, confusion dread awaits
“ Italy and the world ; upon this nice
“ Affair I now solicit your advice.”

XLV.

Jove ceased, and at that moment fixed his look

Upon his father Saturn; at his beck

The old man laughed, and from him quickly broke

These words--“I thought the world had gone to wreck!

“What! if the wretches feel misfortune’s stroke;

“Fight; squabble; must the gods their folly check?

“What, if mankind be sad or merry; either?

“I wish them all hanged in a string together.”

XLVI.

At this Mars lifted his admiring eyes,

And said--“Old man, we two are well agreed;

“What is it to the gods, so high and wise,

“If mortals quarrel, grumble, groan, or bleed;

“Those born to suffer must have injuries;

“Let those born gods laugh on, ’tis so decreed;

“For me, if Venus gives me no rebuff,⁽¹⁴⁾

“I’ll pour upon both cities woes enough.

XLVII.

“A two-fold carnage now my wrath requires,

“Of bodies slain I’ll raise a lofty mound;

“With blood and sweat, until my valour tires,

“I’ll freely inundate the country round.”

“Sir Knight,” said Pallas, “macaroni-criers

“And tripe-men, know your valour to resound;

“Therefore ’tis useless, boastingly inclined,

“To make it known to the celestial mind.

XLVIII.

- “ If you desire a noble enterprize,
 “ Embrace one now—you may the cause sustain
 “ Of Modena ; and I shall patronize
 “ Bologna, meeting on that spacious plain.
 “ Bologna loves to study, to be wise,
 “ Hence at this crisis I must not refrain
 “ From her defence : and if, the Potta’s friend,
 “ You wish for glory, let us now descend.”

XLIX.

- Phœbus at this arose and ardent cried :
 “ Beautiful virgin, I shall also join
 “ In favour of Bologna, where with pride
 “ My arts are studied, and the tuneful Nine.”
 Bacchus, whom Cytherea fondly eyed,
 Fixing his gaze upon her face divine,
 Thus said—with anger darkening on his brow,
 “ Shall mine by all then be abandoned now ?

L.

- “ Shall Modena, renowned for feasting, drinking, ⁽¹⁵⁾
 “ Masking, and tourneys, bacchanalian glee,
 “ And sweetest liquor, while ’mid trouble shrinking,
 “ Complain of shameful negligence in me ?
 “ Mother of Love, even thy soft glances, sinking
 “ Into the heart, subdue the strong and free ;
 “ Come then, on earth, we ’ll make them show their backs,
 “ And turn their beards of gold to yellow flax.”

LI.

Resplendent Venus gave him a sweet smile,

Which said:—Come kiss me, kiss me, amorous swain!

And with her eloquent eyes, eyes that beguile,

Expressed assent to join in the campaign.

Mars, who was gazing on her all the while,

Eager about the strife, the battle-plain,

And seeing her disposed to slip her tether

Said—"By my faith then we will go together.

LII.

"Go, then, thou soul-subduing queen; wherever

"My love goes there must I be, following still

"Her footsteps, from them deviating never,

"Deserting those whom she deserts, at will,

"For her this sword shall combat, I assever!

"This good right arm shall all my vows fulfil,

"And we shall see Panaro's banks o'erflow,

"Carrying ensanguined succours to the Po."

LIII.

Minerva smiled—but Vulcan at her side

Darted at Mars a furious look, and said:

"Impious assassin—savage homicide!

"Would you then share with me the nuptial bed?

"And will great Jove, to her by blood allied,

"Consent to heap disgrace upon her head?

"By Styx, I swear, I know not what restrains

"My hand, from dashing out the wretch's brains.

LIV.

He grasped a heavy hammer which was near him,
And lifted his brown arm in act to slay ;
Mars starting forward, not disposed to fear him,
Let fly his gauntlet at him (not in play,)
Roaring aloud that all might plainly hear him,
“ Wretch, I will teach you to provoke a fray.”
Jove seeing things approaching to a battle
His sceptre raised, and cried : “ Ye factious cattle,

LV.

“ Where do ye think ye are ? Now, by Macone,
“ For this impertinence ye shall be punished ;
“ Bring me the thunder !” Quickly Aquilone
Brought him the bolts, with which he soon astonished
Brown Vulcan, who with proper ceremony,
Fell prostrate on his knees, enough admonished,
Asking for mercy, sorrowing o’er his fate,
But most the conduct of his faithless mate.

LVI.

Venus, who felt a little perturbation,
Through a back door to sidle thought it right ;
And from her father’s, husband’s indignation,
The goddess promptly vanished out of sight ;
Then, without waiting for an invitation,
The God of War and Bacchus took to flight ;
With both she left the skies, and all the three
Lodged at an inn, a jolly company.

LVII.

Of kisses and embraces the chaste Muse

Knows nothing, or declines particular mention ;

Planets have their conjunctions and diffuse

Various effects, but 'tis not her intention

To chaunt them now, though she may not refuse

To murmur that there happened no dissension.

Mars and the Theban youth were most polite,

And passed in perfect harmony the night. ⁽¹⁶⁾

LVIII.

The host of Castelfranco then possessed

A famous hen-roost, numerously supplied,

The gods, a hundred eggs unboiled, undrest,

Dispatched at breakfast, which is not denied.

But the loved dame, by no such hunger prest,

Ate only two eggs, and was satisfied.

The goddess prudently to check suspicion

Had taken on herself a youth's condition.

LIX.

And was superbly habited, in white,

Broidered with scarlet satin ; her soft vest

Was perfumed, sparkling with a silvery light,

White were her stockings, and around her waist

A painted girdle, her small foot to sight

Presented a white shoe transversely laced ;

A lovelier form ne'er breathed, and at her side

A golden dagger hung, her white plume waved with pride.

LX.

But the suspicious host, one-eyed they say, ⁽¹⁷⁾
A Bolognese too, had his doubts excited
When he observed the three together stay
Plotting in one room, since they had alighted;
The gods in consequence made no delay,
But posted thence, for fear of being indicted
(On some false statement by malign detractors)
As vagabonds, or fancied malefactors.

LXI.

To Modena that morning they repaired,
And found there was a merry festival
Among the people, who upon the sward
Were running races for a crimson pall, ⁽¹⁸⁾
Or rather *pallio*; at the three they stared,
And asked their names, and business, one and all;
Many supposed them strolling players, coming
To act a comedy, or such like humming.

LXII.

For Capitan Cardone, Mars they took,
And Bacchus for the lover, and that smart
Endearing youth, so beautiful in look,
The actor of a lovely woman's part:
So does it happen, truth from out her nook
Escapes, though carefully disguised by art,
When what is uppermost we freely say,—
For chance and knowledge in one vessel lay.

LXIII.

The gods intent on gathering information,
Roamed through the stinking city, each division
Considering well, its form and situation,
The art of war, the people's disposition;
Then to an inn retired for recreation,
Where good wine sweetly aided deglutition.
And there on capon, partridge, generous wine,
Supped more like heroes, than like souls divine.

LXIV.

While these were feasting, on the other side
Pallas and Phœbus had on earth descended;
And were industriously occupied
Stirring to war the powers* whom they befriended;
Between the Rubicon and Reno wide,⁽¹⁹⁾
Far as the mountains from the sea extended,
All joined the Bolognese, as thick as clover;
Resolved the famous Bucket to recover.

LXV.

The lovers heard the wonderous preparation,
And roused their vassals for the grand event;
Bacchus, all zeal, with great precipitation
To Germany for reinforcements went,
Soon as they heard his summons, or citation,
Both foot and cavalry were armed and sent
With blessings on San Martin, and October,
Hoping they'd swim in wine, and ne'er be sober.

* *Bologna and Romagna.*

LXVI.

The God of War remained in Italy,

Gathering the troops of Parma and Cremona ;

Venus said that she wished prodigiously

To bring a king, in propria persona ;

And passing where the Arno joins the sea,

Green-mantled Nereids bore her to Gorgona ;

Thence to the island of Sardinia, high in

Renown for cheese, and people fond of lying.

NOTES TO THE SECOND CANTO.

1.

And then ding-dong
The great bell rang.

Stanza ii.

Such was the custom at Modena. The council was summoned by the sound of a large bell placed in the 'Torre dell' Orologio. This bell, after being repaired, was sounded for the first time, nel Sabato Santo dell' anno 1600.

2.

Masters! I am Marcel di Bolognino.

Stanza iii.

In the thirteenth century *Messere* was reputed a title of honour, and continued so to the end of the seventeenth, when *illustressimo* and *eccellenza* came in vogue—and also *magnifico*.

3.

My colleague is a Count,
Ridolf Campeggio.

Stanza iv.

This has some resemblance to the speech of Achemenides, in the third *Æneid*.

Sum patria ex Ithaca, comes infelicis Ulyssei,
Nomen Achemenides.

Campeggi is the name of an ancient and noble family. Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggi was sent by Clement VII. to England, to the court of Henry VIII. in the year 1528, where he gave many proofs of his virtue and prudence. Ridolfo Campeggi was a friend of the poet.

4.

The Senate quite unconscious of the deed.

Stanza v.

In the original, *Reggimento*. In Bologna they called the body of senators, elected to the command of the city, *Reggimento*. The head of them is the *Gonfaloniere*, who was formerly changed every month, but afterwards every two months.

5.

*Then Rarabonè held the highest station
Upon the Bench.*

Stanza vii.

Rarabonè was actually *Capo di Banca*—*Banca*, the place where soldiers receive their pay.

6.

Master Marcello of a Bolognino.

Stanza xi.

An equivoque upon the name Marcello. *Bolognino* is a coin of small value, and Marcello in Venice is a piece of ancient money, worth about twelve *soldi*.

7.

The learned Doctor Baldi.

Stanza xiii.

Doctor Baldi, a learned man, and a friend of the author.

8.

*There by surprise**Pansa was killed.*

Stanza xv.

Appiano Alessandrino, describing the place where the Consul Pansa was killed by the people of Marc Antony, adds that the vallies of Crevalcore are full of green and yellow frogs.

9.

Flogging his tripod charger.

Stanza xxiv.

Called three legged, because lame of one of the four.

10.

Parmegians, Cremonese.

Stanza xxvii.

In the history of these times we find that the Modenese, Parmegians, and Cremonese, were always united in league together.

11.

O'er rolling stars from heavenly stalls advancing.

Stanza xxix.

The original begins thus:—*Dalle stalle del ciel. Dalle stelle alle stalle*, said another poet of that time. All this for alliteration—thus the poet to his mistress, named Marta—*Marta, che merta mirto, a morte m'urta*.

12.

*Time and Death**Served for his footstool, almost out of breath.*

Stanza xlii.

The original literally says, Death and Time looked as if they had got a looseness.

13.

*He turns, and looks—and instantly to rest
The breeze is hushed.*

Stanza xliii.

Signor Guglielmo Moons, agent to the most Serene Elector of Colonia, compares this passage with those of a similar kind in Homer and Virgil. Tassoni probably had them in his recollection without presuming to compete with them.

Line 7.—See Lucian's account of the battles between Endymion and Phæton in the fields of the moon.

14.

For me, if Venus gives me no rebuff.

Stanza xlvi.

Spoken astrologically, and alluding to the conjunction of the planets Mars and Venus.

15.

Shall Modena, renowned for feasting, drinking—

Stanza l.

Modena is distinguished above every other city in the world for its masks, and particularly for its gaiety and amusements during the Carnival.

Line 8.—Alluding to an old proverb.

16.

And passed in perfect harmony the night.

Stanza lvii.

This stanza has not been translated in its full meaning.

Fatto avean Marte, e'l Giovane Tebano

Trenta volte cornuto il Dio Vulcano.

The Italian commentator thinks the description managed very adroitly.

17.

But the suspicious host.

Stanza lx.

The lower orders in Bologna are said to be remarkable for their shrewdness.

18.

Running races for a crimson pall.

Stanza lxi.

Alluding to a custom in Modena, similar to the foot races at village festivals, in various parts of England.

19.

Between the Rubicon and Reno.

Stanza lxiv.

The Rubicon runs into Romagna, but its name varies in different parts. By the Riminese it was anciently called Rigone, Rugone, Urgone, and now Pissatello.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

-CANTO THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

*Venus excites Sardinia's Royal Lord ;
The Modenese assemble all their troops ;
The Potta is enforced, with one accord,
By three bright standards and their gallant groups.
The King, with his brave people, at a word,
Passes the lofty Alps, and downward stoops ;
The Potta, leading on his numerous ranks,
Encamps on sweet Panaro's further banks.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

SMOOTH was the ocean, and the heavens unclouded,
The waters silent, and the winds asleep,
And gemmed with flowers, with pearly dew-drops
The dawn was rising from the liquid deep, [crowded,
Bursting the veil in which the night was shrouded,
When Venus, her own vows resolved to keep,
With amorous visions, mystically spread,
Appeared before the slumbering monarch's bed ;

II.

And gazing on him cried : “ O generous son
“ Of Frederic, honoured for thy deeds in war ;
“ The Italian cities have again begun
“ Their feuds, and dire confusion rends the air ;
“ Modena, above all, may be undone,
“ Though loyal to the empire, every where ;
“ And thou art sleeping, hidden midst the sea !
“ Rise, arm, thou sluggard—and be ruled by me.

III.

- “ Go, aid your friends—since heaven is now preparing
“ New fortunes for you, a new course of glory ;
“ The Bucket you shall save by gallant bearing ;
“ That Bucket won in battle keen and gory.
“ Never was contest so severe, unsparing,
“ Pictured in ancient or in modern story.
“ Modena must prevail, though great the venture,
“ And you the city of the foe shall enter.

IV.

- “ There, of a damsel gentle and polite,
“ Your heart will be enamoured—you will burn
“ With secret, quenchless ardour, day and night,
“ And for her beauties languishingly yearn ;
“ At length you will be blest (I augur right)
“ And your famed offspring (’tis of high concern)
“ Shall govern that proud city ; yes, and be
“ The glory and the boast of Lombardy.”

V.

On this sleep fled, and from the monarch’s eyes
The goddess vanished like an aerial sprite :
When, looking towards the east, he saw the skies
All grey, and dappled with the morning light ;
Then calling for his clothes, at once to rise,
Leapt from his bed, and seized his sword to smite,
The sword kept by his bolster near the wall,—
He struck, and chanced to hit the urinal,

VI.

Which made three bounds, and, into atoms broken,
Fell with its crimson cover to the ground ;
And left a scattery and unseemly token,
In the king's chamber, haply seldom found.
Meanwhile a page, obsequious and fair spoken,
Announced a courier on some mission bound,
With the imperial seal and patent flaming,
Therefore admitted, special favour claiming.

VII.

Frederic, by royal letter, intimated
That he would send an army in defence
Of Modena, and further to him stated
How great the peril and the consequence.
The king the matter with his lords debated,
Resolving, though the venture was immense,
To go himself ; and thence a vassal-force
Of Pisans was embodied, foot and horse.

VIII.

Through Modena, meantime, the news had spread,
That rapidly the Conte di Nebrona
With twice three hundred cavalry had sped
Across the Alps, and joined those of Cremona ;
He was commissioned by Imperial Fred,
Who could not march then in his own persona,
Grand Baron of the empire, old and blinking,
And a dead enemy to water drinking.

IX.

From other quarters information came,
That all Bologna was prepared for fighting ;
The Modenese then, worthy of their name,
Resolved to take the field, all danger slighting ;
And to perform an action, dear to fame,
Both Italy and Germany uniting,
They left their feasts, and the confederate legions
Fearless advanced at once from various regions.

X.

With orders on the sixth revolving day,
When at Grassoni's verdant fields they met,
To concentrate, and, formed in good array,
There for the standard of the Potta wait.
Muse! thou hast ventured in thy martial lay,
Their noble names and deeds to celebrate ;
Give me the scroll that, in my tuneful story,
Their long posterity may know their glory.

XI.

Grassoni's meadows are upon the right,
And from the bridge, whose solid arches bend
O'er the Panaro, but an arrow's flight ;
There the confederate forces were to end
Their march, and halt ; from plain and mountain height
Banners soon waved, the Potta to defend.
First in the field, and foremost for the fight,
Was the Count di Culagna, gallant knight !⁽¹⁾

XII.

He was a brave and noble cavalier,
Poet, philosopher, and hypocrite ;
A sacripant, no danger being near,
But when in danger a poltroon ; to wit,
He talked of giant-killing free from fear,
And killed but capons with his iron spit.
Thence children, following up this Count Culagna,
Cried out with waggish glee, “ Viva Martano ! ” ⁽²⁾

XIII.

He had two hundred sharpers bold to rally on,
Famished with hunger, not unstocked with vermin ;
But reckoning them two thousand,—a battalion
Of valorous men, the contest to determine.
A strutting peacock was his flag-medallion,
Figured with silk and gold ; and, lined with ermine,
A suit of silver mail his form adorned,
His helmet too was richly plumed, and horned. ⁽³⁾

XIV.

Irneo di Montecuccoli was next,
Son of Signor di Montalbano, proud,
Disdainful, often without reason vexed,
Quick heart and hand, in tongue both sharp and loud.
At cards and dice he'd gamble unperplexed
For any chance ; an atheist ; still, allowed
To be a boon companion ;—none was poorer,
And of dry chesnuts an expert devourer.

XV.

He led seven hundred soldiers, men collected

Within his father's lands, and his relations ;

His banner a volcano hot reflected,

Vomiting to the heavens red corruscations.

Attolino, illustriously connected;

Followed with all his troops from various stations.

Him whom, with many others much delighted,

The gracious Emperor of Greece be-knighted.⁽⁴⁾

XVI.

From Rodea, Castel, Magreda, he led

Three hundred infantry all blithe as May ;

So beautifully splendid, and well fed,

They looked knights-errant, travelling on their way.

Upon his helm a mirror was displayed,

With wavy plumes surrounded, rare and gay.

And after him a flag was seen to gleam,

Advancing on the margin of the stream.

XVII.

The towns of Camposanto and la Motta,

Solara, del Cavezzo, Malcantone,

Had given up their worst dregs, to serve the Potta,

Every vile thief and homicidal crony.

Their climate was to all appearance not a

Nursery for honest men, their patrimony

Hanging, or death in jail ; five hundred came,

Inured to want and change, to frost and flame.

XVIII.

Cammil del Forno this battalion led, ⁽⁵⁾

A brave bold man, all kinds of death despising ;
His banner-flag was painted simple red,

And his strong mail the same, that colour prizing ;
No helm, nor ornament, adorned his head,

Nor apt device ; himself particularizing .
With red alone ; he o'er his people rose,
Towering, with black and bushy beard, and brows.

XIX.

The people who were used to plough the sea,

And now the bed of the great river track ;
Those, too, where the Panaro murmuringly
Divides, and deepening rolls its billows back ;
All leave their barks and oars on shore, and flee
With martial instinct to the great attack.

And here with lance and spear arrange their force,
Of foot nine hundred, and one hundred horse.

XX.

Their captains were two monks, with shaven crowns,

Arch-priest Guidoni, and the Frate Bravi,
Who just before as rebels lost their gowns,
Having a band of villains dared to levy,
And taken Stellata and Bonden, towns,

And shut up the Finâl against the navy ;
Now pardoned, with these troops they come to back
The Potta, warlike, and in armour black.

XXI.

Alderan Cimicelli, Grazio Monte

Soon followed ; one had under his command
The Staggians and Verdétans ; Panzan county

And far Roncaglia formed the other band ;
Grazio, the horse which bore Bellerofonte,

Unfolded, and a windlass, Alderand,
Upon their banners floating to the wind,
Six hundred soldiers following close behind.

XXII.

San Felice, Midolla, Camurana,

Six hundred foot, and eighty horsemen sent ;
Naraz Biauchi, Tommasin Fontana,

Conducted them and all their vigour lent ;
Tommasin on his banner had a Rana,

A frog, with sword and shield quite fierce in paint ;
Narazio, who a different whim revealed,
Had a half moon upon a yellow shield.

XXIII.

Then came the river people, those who ply

From Bastia to Bomporto, poor and proud ;
Who both on land and water ceaseless try

To gain by any means a livelihood ;
Of these four hundred ; on their standard high,

Which blazed as much as gold and scarlet could,
The son of Raraboné, Bagarotto,
Painted a pair of bellows, but no motto.

XXIV.

Claretto sage was with him, he who doated
On Donna Anna di Granata fair,
Full of affliction ; for, his dear devoted
A Genoese had carried off,—but where ?
To him at Parma it was kindly noted
That he would find her at Bomporto ; there
He quickly flew, but they had gone away,
And then he swore like sixty friars grey.

XXV.

For some refreshment he approached an inn,
And there by chance he Bagarotto found ;
Forming his scattered soldiers, 'midst the din
Of arms, and furbished armour piled around ;
They both sprung forward to embrace, like kin,
For they had met at court, and friendship owned ;
And both had left, (they could not keep it longer,)
'Their wretched hope to those who die of hunger.

XXVI.

Claretto told him of his recent flame,
Long scenes of love, embarrassing commotions,
And how with mockeries Cupid, full of game,
His rivals disappointed, and their notions ;
And how, to his great agony and shame,
He lost his own sweet damsel ; his emotions
In bliss and misery ; Bagarotto smiled,
And said, “ You 're always in some scrape, my child ;

XXVII.

“ Come to the war with me and quit this whining,
“ These amorous whims and idle occupations;
“ Fame is not gained by oglings, love-sick pining,
“ By a monkey-face in mask, or soft flirtations.”
Claretto not a syllable rejoining,
Longed to become a soldier, all impatience
He seized a pike; and drinking-bouts forswore.—
But let us recollect the other corps.

XXVIII.

Fredo, Cognento, Cittanova, showed
Two lovers dead beneath a mulberry-tree,
Thisbe and hapless Pyramus; and bestowed
Four hundred men, led on, all brave and free,
By young Furiero Manzol, well endowed
With noble talents; whose agility
Transcended all in dancing *la Canar*,
Kicking his heels, and capering in the air.

XXIX.

At once came from another side the men
Of Villavar, Alberto, Navicelli,
Three hundred; marshalled to the battle plain
By the fierce limping Agolin Novelli.
His symbol à dark sky which seemed to rain
Over a field of bean plants, or *baccelli*;
And after them came running to the war, a
Squadron from Corleto, and Bazzovara

XXX.

Corleto, rival gay of Grevalcore,⁽⁶⁾

Named by o'erjoyed Augustus on that day
He conquered Antony with lasting glory ;

With whom he after shared imperial sway ;
And Bazzovara, now a Sudatory,*

Once famed for deeds of love and arms, they say,
What time Labadin, shrewdly all allow,
Made a medicinal drench for his dead cow.

XXXI.

They were commanded by Dottor Masello,

Who books forsook, in battle to prevail ;
He armed himself and looked like a Marcello,

With ancient tunic and a coat of mail ;
His symbol was a radish, pleasant fellow,

With large ripe golden seeds, depicted well :
Then the Rubierans came with expedition,
Joined with Marzaglian troops, in one division.

XXXII.

Commanded by Bertoldo Grilenzon,

A famous fencer and a wrestler too ;

A tattered mattrass on his banner shone,

From which in flakes the woolly stuffing flew ;

His troops seemed equal to the other one,

Perhaps it was more numerous a few ;

Of twice five hundred soldiers it consisted,

From four contiguous villages enlisted.

* Literally, *Campo di Sudore*, a field of sweat.

XXXIII.

Galvan Castald, and Franceschin Murano,

The standards of Porcile, and Montalle,
And those of Cudiana, and Mugnano,

United at the Ladder inn to rally;
Three hundred scythes were mustered by Galvano.

Franceschin had three hundred pikes to tally;
Galvano's symbol was a steelyard bright,
Franceschin's was a magpie, black and white.

XXXIV.

Behold Boschetti, armed upon his steed,

The Count of San Cesario and Bazzan,
Who'd just before expelled from thence with speed

The enemy's garrison, and the Capitàn;
That state he had achieved by valorous deed,

With hands to execute, and head to plan;
And now of these and other serfs, by force,
He had obtained and armed a hundred horse.

XXXV.

Pomposo next; upon his shield he bore

A gridiron in St. Lorenzo's name;
And at his side a scimitar he wore;

His troops, genteel and handsome, promptly came.
A fox, accomplished in dissembling lore,

Collegara and Corticella claim;
Bernard Calori leads them from their bogs,
Three hundred, or a few more, tattered rogues.

XXXVI.

Rangon had two brave sons his age to bless ;
Gherardo strong, and Giacopin the sly ;
Gherardo was the senior, and the place
He in his father's household held was high ;
He was the Major-Domo, nothing less,
But now this proud distinction willingly
He to his brother yielded, and then prest
To battle, with a sea-shell on his crest.

XXXVII.

Spilimbert, Vignola, and Savignano,
Campilio Castelnovo, him obeyed ;
Pejano, Guia, Montorsol, and Marano,
With those of Malatigna he arrayed
A hundred cavalry, with spears *in mano*.
A thousand archers followed where he led,
Whose arrows had been poisoned with the juice
Of garlic, leeks, and onions,—fit for use.

XXXVIII.

Whilst these came from the right, the armed son
Of Prendiparte from the left appeared,
Mirandola's choice troops inviting on ;
His name was Galeotto, known and feared
Through all the states of Italy, as one
Gallant and brave ; a hundred horsemen reared
Their lances high, encased in mail ; no wincers,
Under the impress of a pair of pincers.

XXXIX.

Campogaiano then, and San Martino,

Dispatched five hundred foot, and the device
Which graced their banner was *un Saracino* ;

They armed with bells and cross-bows in a trice ;
Mauro Ruberti sported *il domino*,

Chief manager of soups, not over nice ;
I mean he had a victualling contract, and
He furnished ration mouthfuls on demand.

XL.

Zaccaria Tosabecchi then was lord

Of Carpi ; he was old and gouty too ;
Age had reduced his vigour, but in word
And spirit, still he was a warrior true ;
A daughter his inheritress, ador'd

By her good spouse,* who all her virtues knew.
Beau of the province, and a waggish fellow,
Cousin of Manfred, and called Leonello.

XLI.

Anxious to join the warlike camp that day,

The old man armed both foot and horse with speed ;
A litter was prepar'd without delay,

Carried by four stout men o'er rock and mead ;
It was clamped round with iron, painted grey ;

For two good steeds to bear in case of need ;
Such a machine, so strong with wood and steel,
Was afterwards constructed at Castile,

* *Conte di Solera.*

XLII.

And used in Burgundy, with prime effect,
Against the muskets of the king of France.
Zaccaria brought two hundred, his elect,
On nags and asses, eager to advance;
But soon the foot stopped short, from sheer neglect;
The Count who was to lead them this new dance,
Had let his bustling sire in law depart,
Whilst with his wife he staid to make a tart.

XLIII.

Seeing himself by this uxorious beau
Abandoned, Zac pursued another plan;
And gave four hundred men to Brusato,
As many more to Guido Coccapan;
The first, an elephant was proud to show,
Guido, two giants gambling;—the old man
Had on his banner an insidious cat,
Cowering and watching eagerly a rat.

XLIV.

Then those of Formigin and Fiorano,
Where sweetest figs in great abundance grow,
Three hundred soldiers;—Ubert Petrezano
Commands them, and a goblin-flag they show;
And with him Baiamont, from Livizzano,
Comes with his squadrons, which with ardour glow;
He had two hundred, halberts stoutly bearing,
And blue and yellow on his standard flaring.

XLV.

Uguccion Castelvetro came in mail,

His banner a white thistle,—and along
With him three hundred archers, tutored well,

With darts and slings across their shoulders slung;
From Gorzon Ceretro, and Maranell,

The good Lanfranco, from Grisolfi sprung,
Five hundred men collected in a line,
And carried a meal-bolter for his sign;

XLVI.

On which account the Crusca moved a suit,

Which was remitted to the Court Romano.
Their flag a vine and pear-tree, full in fruit;

Stefano, and the Count di Fogliano,
Had with the Foglianese, in arms acute,

Joined those of Montezibio and Varano;
Consisting of two hundred eighty-nine,
Filthy and greasy, as a herd of swine.

XLVII.

But where are now the people of Sassol,

Who brew the nectar of the gods? for there
The brightest days above its villas roll,

There heaven yields all its grace, and balmy air;
That land of love and ardent glory, sole

Mother of that which charms us every where;
Two hundred horse, a thousand foot were drawn
From pleasant town, and flower-empurpled lawn.

XLVIII.

Roldano della Rosa at their head,
Who fighting once in holy Palestine
Against the Moors and the Egyptians, shed
Rivers of pagan blood; the martial line
Roses and glittering spots of gold displayed
Upon their flag, the blushing hue of vine;
Then came, at no great distance from the rest,
The Lord of Pompeiano, richly drest.

XLIX.

Sweet Pompeiano, where the amorous air
Dissolves the ice upon the mountain's brow;
Gommol and Palaviggio, gathered there,
To Folco's splendid dame respectful bow.⁽⁷⁾
Under their flag, a hedgehog, sharp and bare,
Folco had gained three hundred—these, I vow,
The most audacious, and adroit in name,
On iron sandals and with javelins came.

L.

And, what was much more wonderful to see,
Fifty fair damsels with cross-bows, inured
Amidst the forests with dexterity
To shoot wild beasts, by woodland joys allured;
In gowns attired, with quivers jocundly
Their march from mountain high to plains endured;
Their ringlets in disorder from behind
Floated fantastically on the wind.

LI.

Bruno di Cervarola held the sway
O'er that domain, and also o'er Moran,
And Pigni and Saltino ; for affray
And litigated suit he was the man ;
Soon as he heard the signal-trumpet's bray,
With his two hundred bullies forth he ran ;
And as he had caprices in his head,
For his device he took a small straw-bed.

LII.

By sweet Bianca Pagliarola * won, ⁽⁸⁾
On her account he divers perils shared,
And always gave his laurels as her own,
To her who warmed his heart so cold and hard ;
And now his secret thoughts in daylight shone,
A painted straw-bed proved his fond regard ;
And in the middle of the shield was seen,
A net, betraying the white straw within.

LIII.

Then after him there came Mombarranzzone,
With Signor Ranièr, who of Pregnano
Ruled the new people, and the Gonfalone
Which was sent to him by Castellarano.
Fifty upon their saddles, *arcione* ;
Four hundred tramping on the plain, *piano* ;
With ript up shoes, and without soles they go,
Their streaming flag a flying buffalo.

* *Bianca paglia*, white straw.

LIV.

Brandol, Ligurcian, Moncereto, were
By Scardin Cap'dibue led o'er the plains ;
He on his banner had, with talents rare,
Painted a devil in a field of canes.
There Signor di Pazzan, with joyous air,
Comes with a plume of laurel leaves, and feigns
Or fancies that he is the Muse's mirror,
Thoughtless, poor fellow ! of his dreadful error.

LV.

Alessio was his name, in *Sesta* rhyme
He had composed the loves of Drusiana ;
In all things else an honour to his time ;
He brought with him Farned, and Montagnana ;
These people with the others did not chime,
And were not skilful players at quintana ;
They came five hundred, plundering, base curmudgeons,
Armed with bill-hooks and staves, and sharpened biud-
geons.

LVI.

The standard of Bison and Veriga,
With a black-pudding on an azure ground,
Pancin Grassetti gloried to display ;
He led four hundred to a bell's sharp sound ;
But more than these, one hundred in array
From Montombrar and Festato were found ;
Their flag a donkey in a pear-tree standing,
Artimedor Masett the corps commanding.

LVII.

Taddeo Sertorio of Castel d'Aiano,

A Count, and brother of Monaca, led
The troops of Montetortor, and Missano,

Where happened the great flight ;⁽⁹⁾ Rosella sped
With rattling bows and filthy spits *in mano*,

Their flag, on white, a frying-pan displayed ;
Three hundred traversed the rough roads with feet
All hard, and callous both to stones and heat.

LVIII.

The banners of Monforte and Montese,

Of Montespecchio and of Trentin, now ;
Gualtier, the son of Paganel Cortese,

Had painted on its field a pregnant sow ;
Four hundred, and with hatchets arm'd, more easy
To cut, for fuel, forest branch or bough ;
Some carried dung-forks, some had clubs for spears,
And, clothed with skins of bears, were cuirassiers.

LIX.

Count di Miceno was a gallant knight,

The Potta's brother ; he one day had gone
To Modena, where ravished with delight

The people kept him, charmed with his renown ;
The army had not one of greater might ;

One better, nor more feared in war, not one ;
He was a Corsair once, of dubious fame,
A captain then in France, Voluce was his name.

LX.

Him to retain, the city gave Miceno,
Salto, Trignano, and Renocchia too,
Lavacchio, Montemerl, and Monfestino,
And several others to his merit due ;
St. George in every action might be seen ; a
Javelin he bore on foot, a soldier true ;
With snowy armour and a feathered crest
He brought eight hundred with him of his best.

LXI.

Panfilo Sassi, Nicoll Adelardi,
Followed soon after with their Frignanese ;
And the Fananans and Sestolans hardy,
Together raised their standards to the breeze ;
One had three mountains in the air, marked TARDY,
The other had a cypress in the seas ;
With one Olina, Sassoross, Acquaro ;
The other Roccascaglia, Castellaro.

LXII.

In all one thousand, after them at hand
Came an uncouth unconquerable race
From Pellegrino, Pianoro, and
From all the windings of that barren place
Where the fierce dragon scattered golden sand,
And where Panaro's spring the eye may trace ;
Redonelato, Pieve, and Pelago,
And Sant' Andrea, father of the snow.

LXIII.

Lands of the wind, Fiumalbo, Bucasol,
Magrignan, Montecret and Castellino,
Sent fourteen hundred, of undaunted soul,
Rough, raw, in-dwellers of the *Apenmino*;
Huge Apenmine, who fearless of controul
Looks round and views the heavens in his *vicino*;
His woods of snowy hair so thick and deep,
Serve as a broom the starry vault to sweep.

LXIV.

All come on foot, in boots, and with cross-bows,
And martinellos, which with ease propel
The death-inflicting darts, whose whizzing blows
Transpierce both sevenfold shield and steely mail;
Each o'er his back a pompous vestment throws,
The skin of wolf, or bear, without a tail;
Rapiers and daggers dangle at their side,
And hats and hoods upon their heads are tied.

LXV.

But who commands the Alpine squadron? Who
But fierce Ramberto Balugola? See
A child upon his banner near a Jew,
Making him kiss the cross religiously.
And now his black and rusty armour view,
A chesnut feather on his head;—how free
And proud his bearing; how supremely grand,
A hatchet on his back, three arrows in his hand,

LXVI.

Morovico da Ronchi followed soon,
The lord of the domain and master truly ;
Palagan, Castrignano, and Moccogn,
He led to war, and also Santo Giuli ;
About four hundred, each with a spontoon,
Trode the resounding earth, accoutred duly ;
Their standard was a gallant ship at sea,
And they came singing *fal-de-ral-de-rec*.

LXVII.

A youth of generous heart and lofty mind,
Upon whose polished cheek could not be seen a
Promise of down even of the softest kind,
So young, so fair, his name was Valentino ;
He painted on his flag Love sleeping, blind,
And governed Medola, Montefiorino,
Mursiano, Rubbian, Massa, and Rovella,
Vedriola, and the Geese * of grand Castello.

LXVIII.

With pikes and javelins they were well supplied,
With belly mail, and shields they frowning shook ;
With pantaloons, and mantles long and wide,
Which dragged the stones at every step they took ;
Their shoe-heels were so high, and hard beside,
Like Agramante's army was their look ;
Marching in wooden shoes, when day was o'er ;
Their numbers only five and twenty score.

* Referring to them as stupid people.

LXIX.

After the mountain infantry were seen,
Passing in squadrons to the plains below;
The Potta ordered, with majestic mien,
His own battalions out, to meet the foe,
Well armed ;—the Germans, Cremonese, I ween,
And Parmans too, already near the Po,
Had halted, much fatigued, at eventide ;
Fearful of Reggio—on the enemy's side.

LXX.

He had meantime given proper intimation
To the five captains, who their banners spread
In Garfagnana, not to quit their station,
Until the king arrived with those he led ;
For he had sent from Lucca information
To the city of his coming, at the head
Of his battalions, and required (no doubt)
Guides to conduct them safely on their route.

LXXI.

The following morning having urged his way
Through the direct straight road of Gallicano,
He passed between the Apennines that day,
Descending down to Padul from Frignano ;
Vetidio Carandino closed the array,
With the gay flag of Camporeggiano ;
On which an owl was painted in a bush,
And carrying in his crooked beak a brush.

LXXII.

The flag of Castelnovo plainly showed

A chequered chess-board, and the troops were seen
Behind in scattered columns on the road ;

Simon Bertacchi led them, bold of mien ;
Here came the royal baggage, many a load ;

Here wearied servants varying the scene ;
And those whom Lucca's wine-cups had detained,
Sleeping upon the jaded beasts remained.

LXXIII.

But those of far Soraggio, and Sillano,

One, by Otton Campora was commanded ;
The other, by Jaccon di Ponz Urbano,
Who carried a crowned fasces, dexter-handed ;

The star of morning was by Camporano

Figured with a red coif, and tightly banded ;
These four, in all six thousand foot, were caught
In sixty villages, and hither brought.

LXXIV.

But the fifth standard had three hundred horse,

Conducted by Pandolfo Bellincino ;
Where on a field of gold was traced, with force,
The gentle figure of a Babbuino ;
The knights had girded on their swords, of course,
And on the saddle fixed a Balestrino.

With shields and spears prepared, away they went,
And took the right side of the armament.

LXXV.

For in that quarter were the Fiorentines,
Equipped in favour of the Bolognese ;
Coasting along so closely with their lines,
That without care they might be checked with ease ;
The king had there six thousand Ghibellines,
Pisans, Ligurians, Sardins, and Lucchese ;
And cavalry two thousand, with supplies ;
All Germans and Suabians, his allies.

LXXVI.

The Potta soon with judgment militaire,
In three divisions formed his numerous host ;
Two thousand horse were given to Manfred's care ;
The infantry in number were the most,
Twelve thousand strong ; and these became the share
Of brave Gherardo, who, the army's boast,
In act and look a cunning fox exprest
Leading his pups to storm a rabbit's nest.

LXXVII.

The third division was not large, but strong,
And well supplied with battering rams, machines,
And those tremendous instruments which long
The ancients used, producing terrible scenes.
The architect of iron-crow, and prong,
Pasquin Ferrari, who prepared the means,
Led on a thousand bow-men armed with darts,
Twenty-two engineers, one hundred carts.

LXXVIII.

Arriving at the bridge, the Potta still

Pushed on, and gained the river's further side ;
And after him, the squadrons were with skill

Conducted cross the stream,—where they descried
Six hundred foot upon the neighbouring hill,

Who had from fruitful Nonantola hied,
From Stuffione's rich adjacent state,
And Ravarino—at a pressing rate,

LXXIX.

By two new knights commanded, gaily drest

In mail, with branching plumes of lily white ;
Twin sons of charming Molza, loveliest, best,

Beltrand and Gherardino ; full in sight
Two lumps of roasted liver were exprest

On a shield white and red, with laurel dight ;
This their device, ingeniously embossed,
And the last squadron of the Potta's host.

NOTES TO THE THIRD CANTO.

1.

Count di Culagna.

Stanza xi.

Count de la Rocca di Culagna. Culagna is a rock upon the mountains of Reggio, as famous as Capodibove at Rome. Tassoni has here embodied the character of a Ferrarese Count. In one of his letters he calls him *Vantatore*, and *Poltrone*. The general opinion is, that under the name of Count Culagna, one of the principal heroes of the poem, is figured Alessandro Brunsantini, the son of Count Paolo, described under the appellation of Don Flegetonte, il Bel, in the seventy-second and seventy-third stanza of the ninth canto.

2.

“Viva Martano!”

Stanza xii.

Martano is described in the seventeenth canto of the Orlando Furioso as a man vile and presumptuous.

3.

His helmet too was richly plumed, and horned.

Stanza xiii.

The horn was anciently estimated as a crown, and is now,

says the Italian commentator, worn upon the crest as a mark of nobility; therefore this hero carried his horn in such a way that every body might see it.

4.

The gracious Emperor of Greece be-knighted.

Stanza xv.

When Baldwin, Emperor of Constantinople, went to Italy, in passing Modena he made several knights, among others, Attalino, and Guidotto Rodea, Forte Livizzo, and Rainero de Denti di Balugola.

5.

Cammit del Forno.

Stanza xviii.

Camillo dal Forno was celebrated in joust and tournament, and signalized himself against Niccolo Rocca, in a public joust, in 1569.

6.

Corleto rival gay of Grevalcore.

Stanza xxx.

Corleto and Grevalcore were named by way of contrast to each other, from *Cor letum*, and *grave cor*.

Line 7.—Labadin was a man of great learning and integrity, and the poet's master.

7.

To Folco's splendid dame respectful bow.

Stanza xlix.

A satire on the name and beauty of Signora Laura Cesi Contessa di Pompeiano.

8.

By sweet Bianca Pagliarola won.

Stanza lii.

A pun, Bianca paglia, meaning white straw, and Bianca Pagliarola, the name of the lady. The Pagliaroli family, however, existed in 1524.

9.

Where happened the great fight.

Stanza lvii.

The old Count Culagna (Paolo Brusantini) with seven hundred men coming through Missano from the mountains to an open plain, happened to discover certain Florentine horsemen, and were so valorous as to run away for seven miles without stopping.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

*While the brave Potta Castelfranco worries
With a close siege—the Reggians attack
Rubiera ;—bold Gherardo softly hurries
By night, to its assistance, never slack ;
The province he assails, and deeply flurries
The Captain, who from famine turns his back ;
The valorous fall, and others, with petitions
To save their lives, accept of cile conditions.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

THE camp was halted on the dexter bank,
And all the squadrons martially disposed;
The sun shone brightly on their arms, each rank
Reflecting splendour as it moved and closed;
The plumes and banners gently rose and sank,
As the soft breeze awakened or reposed;
The brooks and vallies murmured half astounded,
And heaven with arms and cavalry resounded. 1

II.

THE Potta, gifted as a rhetorician,
And, as a rostrum-speaker known to fame,
Upon a lofty hill took his position,
Between the camp and river to declaim;
By captains girt, and men of high condition,
Crowned with a cap, montiera is its name,
He spoke to the ferocious multitude,
With look magnanimous, and accent loud.

III.

- “ O ! genuine sons of Rome, of valour high, ⁽¹⁾
“ ’Tis true from generous Frederic you obtained
“ A privilege, on parchment crisp and dry,
“ By which an ancient tract of land you gained
“ On the Lavino;—but ’tis all my eye,
“ Not worth a worthless fig, if not maintained;
“ If with these arms, borne with so much discretion,
“ We do not take it into our possession.

IV.

- “ Alone from Castellfranco opposition
“ Can be expected;—reinforced they are;
“ But they will have no refuge, no volition,
“ Nor choice, when we at once attack them; there
“ Our army shall remain in good position
“ Against the foe, not stirring yet, I swear;
“ There we’ll enjoy with gaiety and pleasure,
“ The goods of others, without stint or measure.

V.

- “ All will be ours, no doubt, all ours; and these
“ Fertile domains, and cattle browsing high;
“ The capons, puddings, tartlets, sausages,
“ Will greet us hot and smoking, seasoned high;
“ And we shall slumber with luxurious ease
“ On beds in which the enemy now lie;
“ The king too will arrive ere day is ended,
“ For even now his troops the mountains have descended.

VI.

“ But why delay, ye warriors?—let us go
“ And cure these blockheads of their whims, we’ll take
“ This Castelfranco, and we then shall know
“ Their metal well, and what defence they make.
“ Riches shall with that castle’s plunder flow,
“ And of that plunder you shall all partake ;
“ For my part, not a doit shall come to me,
“ *My* share the poor shall have in charity.” (2)

VII.

This said, the army panting for the emprise,
Was moved with such rapidity along,
The enemy was taken by surprise ;
And had not time to muster very strong.
Quickly the passes were possessed to poize
And fix the dread machines, with bolt and thong ;
The first full stroke of a trabucco vast
At them pell-mell an ass and panniers east.

VIII.

The mural engine, skilfully directed,
Shot forth the beast so vigorously and well,
It rose in air, and, where the crowd collected,
Within the castle, thundering down it fell ;
The simple populace were much affected,
And gaped and stared, all horror-struck and pale ;
Seeing, prodigious sight ! before them fly,
An ass’s carcase headlong from the sky ! (3)

IX.

There chanced to be a captain in that garrison,
A little skilled in knowledge mathematical :
Who had a nose, prodigious by comparison,
Hence called Nasidio, which was quite emphatical ;
He feared the storming would be rather harassing,
And the result not very enigmatical.
Therefore, he offered terms to quit the fray,
If he remained unsuccoured, the next day.

X.

These were accepted—and that very night
The king arrived with trumpet-clang and glee,
And blazing fires; but morning's early light
Changed all their merry greetings wofully ;
A courier hurrying on with all his might
Came to solicit help immediately,
Against the Reggian troops, who had begun
The war, amidst night-shadows dark and dun.

XI.

The Reggian people openly professed
Hatred against the Modenese before,
And often with Bologna had address
Against them their united strength of yore ;
Now watching a fit time to manifest
Their usual malice, burning at the core,
After the king had passed (the royal hero)
They sent six thousand men to sack Rubiera.

XII.

The king in council called the warriors bold,
The valorous heroes on the Potta's side ;
And having candidly the peril told
Which that proud fortress was compelled to bide ;
Full to the right his noble eyes he rolled,
Where sat the Potta, of his race the pride ;
Who after rising, most important man,
Smoothed down his beard, and spat, and thus began.

XIII.

“ Great sovereign ! you are worthiest to select
“ A captain from the chiefs assembled now ;
“ This strongly leaguered fortress to protect,
“ And pour out vengeance on the audacious crew.”
More he had said, but he was rudely checked ;
For the Count di Culagna took the cue ;
And springing from his bench, with ardent eyes,
Cried, “ I'm your man ; who joins the enterprize ?”

XIV.

The king amazed turned round and said aside :
“ Who's this so bold, magnanimous, and brave ?”
The Potta, whispering to the king, replied :
“ This is a glorious madman, half a knave.”
The king, who only wished that one well tried,
And famous for his martial deeds, should have
The guidance of the enterprize, and not a
Raw soldier, left the appointment to the Potta.

XV.

The Potta knew that the Parmeggians were
Detested by the Germans, and if sent
Together, as allies, they would not pair,
But be like cats and dogs, on quarrelling bent;
He therefore wisely took especial care
To send against the foe the armament
Of Parma, by Correggio led—the force,
Three thousand foot, and twice five hundred horse.

XVI.

But to Gherardo the supreme command
Was given, five thousand foot his force augmenting :
And those Bertoldo brought with bow and brand,
Marzaglians, and Rubierans unrelenting ;
The gallant chief repassed then, with his band,
The bridge, and as dun night the sky was teinting,
Heard, at Marzaglia, every place was taken,
Except the rocky fort, which stood unshaken.

XVII.

The hero pondered, for he was perplexed
Whether to pass that river, or remain
Until the dusky night was by the next
Uprising of the sun dispelled again ;
When lo ! bold Mars (ingenious pretext)
Appeared, and well the likeness he could feign,
As Scalandrone da Bismanta true
Bandit, and captain of a roguish crew.

XVIII.

And lifting up a torch upon the border,
Illumined all the passes with its light ;
So that the camp without the least disorder,
Was led across, regardless of the night ;
The winds too shook the leaves that not a word or
Footstep was heard their ardent hopes to blight ;
Ferocious Mars, then to the captains raising
His terrible voice, and on them keenly gazing,

XIX.

Said—" Warriors ! come along, come bravely on !
" I give you victory—prove your lofty station !
" While in the careless city—every one
" Is occupied in theft and depredation ;
" Expecting still to hear the rock is won
" And sure success will crown that expectation ;
" For at the siege they 'd left a valiant fellow
" Powerfully armed, Foresto Fontanella.

XX.

" Their base perfidious deeds I can't endure ;
" And hence I come to be revenged with you ;
" If suddenly upon their heads we pour,
" Even were they heroes they 'd be in a stew ;
" Turn to the left, Gherardo, and be sure
" To shut the passage as you ought to do ;
" That with Giberto and Bertoldo I
" May reach the bridge and front the enemy."

XXI.

He ceased—and all were stedfastly imprest
That Scalandrone urged them to the fight ;
Gherardo kept the left, towards the west
Giberto moved, continuing on the right ;
And on his helm he fixed his plumed crest,
A snow-white signal in his people's sight ;
Because he heard the troops of Fontanella
Not far off singing *La Rosina bella*. ⁽⁴⁾

XXII.

In silent eagerness they forward pushed,
Not meeting outpost, scout, or sentinel ;
When all at once the jovial song was hushed,
And on the ear a hideous screaming fell ;
Before the infantry the horsemen rushed,
Then Mars two torches lit, which, blazing well,
Made the surrounding scenery so bright,
That day seemed born without the solar light.

XXIII.

Foresto, who immediately beheld
The Parman and Rubieran flag advancing,
His infantry too quits and braves the field,
Leading his squadron to the battle prancing ;
Takes Mars for Scalandrone, lifts his shield,
His vizor lowers, spurs on, and puts his lance in
Rest, and exactly in the belly hits him,
But hurts him not, although he thinks he spits him.

XXIV.

Mars, passing forward, aimed a swinging stroke,
And battered him with more than mortal vigour;
He burnt his beard, and half his visage broke,
Leaving the chief a most unchristian figure;
Yet like a Christian he the outrage took,
And met Bertoldo, who with cruel rigour
Had burst Arlotto's truss, and laid him flat;
Doctor and alchemist—but what of that?

XXV.

Snapped were both javelins in that fierce attack,
And then their shining swords forthwith they drew;
Foresto was upon a horse's back,
Unparalleled; he galloped not, but flew;
Generous he was as swift, of steeds the crack;
And if the ancient chronicles be true,
He was descended from the good Frontino, ⁽⁵⁾
In history made immortal by Turpino.

XXVI.

Bertoldo had most strength, and most temerity,
The hugest, too, by far, in bulk and weight;
Foresto had most grace and most dexterity,
Little in body, but in valour great;
Each nobly showed his prowess and celerity,
And loftiness of soul, and burning hate;
The ground was covered where the heroes stood,
With broken mail, and bits of flesh, and blood.

XXVII.

Meanwhile Giberto brave had broke his lance,
I'th' paunch of Gambatorta Scarlattino ;
And with the fragment, turning it askance,
Tore up the guts of Stevanel Rossino ;
Then snatched a hatchet, close to him by chance,
From Testarancia, son of San Donnino ;
And with it, with both hands dismembering, lopping,
Excelled all mince-makers in skilful chopping.

XXVIII.

He killed outright Braghetton Bibianello,
Who once at Rome became a courtier gay ;
And then engraved his name, conceited fellow !
Near Montecavallo, on the public way ;
His paunch was like a barrel ; always mellow,
He could drink dry Albano, so they say ;
And never prayed to heaven by any sign,
But to convert the ocean into wine.

XXIX.

The stroke his paunch burst open, and beside,
A bag of wine, upon the pummel bound ;
The blood and wine flowed out, a streaming tide ;
The wine most grieved him, spilt upon the ground ;
With the black blood the soul rushed through his side,
Retarded by the scent of wine around ;
And quitted joyfully its fat abode,
Thinking 'twas going a delicious road.

XXX.

Alcèò d'Ormondo, too, from life was hurled,
Camerier d'Onore, and Prothonotary,
At the Pope's Court, the caput of the world ;
Knight, Count, and Doctor, quite a luminary.
The Miser Baccarin, his banner furled,
Inventor of paste-meat and lectuary,
Was left defunct, with others, also slain,
To fatten with their limbs Rubiera's plain.

XXXI.

Prospero d'Albinèa, Feltrin Cassola,
Marco Denaglia, Brun da Mozzatella,
Berto da Rondinar, Andrea Scajola,
Stefano Zobli, Gian da Torricella,
Guglielmo dalla Latta, and Pier Mazzola,
Were by the warrior thrown, *fuor di sella* ;
With Ugo Brama, and Giammatteo Scaruffo,
All lifeless pressed the earth, in that terrific *zuffò*.

XXXII.

Foresto at the might Giberto used
Turned his astonished eyes, and muttering saw
His men among the open fields confused,
Flying, in martial tactics rather raw ;
And fearing to remain, at once refused
Alone to stay,—determined to withdraw ;
He on Bertoldo moved, and aiming low,
Killed his opponent's charger at a blow.

XXXIII.

Then spurring his fine horse, fleet as the wind,
Amidst his people flying from the scuffle,
Bellowed aloud :—" Ye basest of mankind !
" Is this your valour, courage thus to muffle ?
" If you have not the soul, the noble mind,
" Death to despise, but still delight to shuffle,
" Abandoning the war—at least retire
" Into the city—there recruit your fire."

XXXIV.

So saying towards the walls he instant rode,
Where succour seemed to him, alas ! too late ;
Full of dead people was the dreadful road ;
Gherardo having toiled to gain the gate,
Checking the wrath that in his bosom glowed.
The gallant chief began to hesitate ;
Uncertain whether he should meanly fly
Amidst the shades of night, or stop and die.

XXXV.

Resolved at last, he, where the enemy made
A stout defence, precipitately hurried ;
He cut off Furio dalla Coccia's head,
And his long sword in Vivian's belly buried ;
The first, crack-brained, with oddest fancies fed ;
The other was six cubits tall and florid ;
This hated August's sun, it made him queerish,
That, guttling roasted chesnuts, made them dearish.

XXXVI.

Two more he struck, with different success,
Erri and Baciliero, Germans twain ;
One punctured in the navel ends his race,
Tumbling confusedly among the slain ;
The other who was in an awkward case,
Though trussed, his hernia made him walk with pain ;
The pointed sword in puncturing the part
Let out the wind, and cured him, spite of art. ⁽⁶⁾

XXXVII.

Arrived at length where the last banner waved,
By Foncierolo Alberghetti reared ;
Although by heroes resolutely braved,
He forced his entry, and the passage cleared ;
Unconscious he had thoughtlessly behaved,
Leaving his troops surrounded, and uncheered ;
Meanwhile Count San Donnino heard around, ⁽⁷⁾
The signal of the grey-eyed morn resound.

XXXVIII.

This was the general of the Reggian band,
The friend of Phœbus and Bellona fierce ;
And, when the foe arrived, he had in hand
A tender madrigal in softest verse ;
Reggio ne'er saw his equal, one so grand,
In past or modern times, so bards rehearse—
One more esteemed than him in peace or war ;
He was the counsellor of Salinguerr.

XXXIX.

I speak of Salinguerra, ⁽⁸⁾ once the lord
Of rich Ferrara, and of Francolino ;
Till by the pope, his enemy, abhorred,
He was expelled his *nobile domino*.
And the old sceptre was at last restored
To the proud family of Aldobrandino.
In various chronicles the count is found,
To be a man respected and renowned.

XL.

Soon as he hears the clang, he calls for drink,
To Livio his good squire, and eke for mail ;
And quaffs the liquor bubbling to the brink ;
Turns up the goblet, having drained it well !
He then puts on his armour, link by link,
His gaiters too, and looking out to smell
The scent abroad, finds all the people quitting
Their homes with lanterns,—for the hour most fitting.

XLI.

In his *Usbergo* clad, he quickly ties
His helmet on, with ostrich plume bedecked ;
Girds on his sword, his spacious buckler tries,
And mounts an Andalusian, rain-bow-necked.
The deaf Malguzz, a scythe of awful size
Before him bears, their persons to protect ;
Wroth was the count, and vexed at heart withal,
Because he could not end his madrigal.

XLII.

Proceeding to the gate at once he hears

A dreadful tumult, and, the walls ascending,
Looks round him, and discovers bristling spears

Covering the bridge and plain, mishap portending ;
He saw the enemy, which increased his fears,

Had shut the passage up, the strife suspending ;
And full of anguish, painfully opprest,
He, deeply groaning, struck his ample chest.

XLIII.

And, having ordered some one at his side

To bring two thousand archers into play,
They shoot their arrows, thinking to divide,

And conquering drive the invading foe away ;
As waters, influenced by the foaming tide,

Flow and recede, in river, sea, or bay ;
So foam and roll the foe-men, and oppose
Their bucklers strong, against the thickening blows.

XLIV.

But, change not their position, nor their place ;

Meanwhile the dawn illumes, with reddening light,
The eastern sky, and the sun's radiant face

Makes the blue vault of heaven divinely bright ;
Gherardo gave his troops a little grace,

Refreshing them ; and then the valiant knight
At daybreak in the ditch, and on the rock,
Produced amongst them a tremendous shock.

XLV.

The rock-assailing band Bertoldo led,
Giberto had the left, Gherard the right ;
The count now found his men had neither bread,
Nor soup, which made him sicken at their plight ;
However they might fight he thought unfed ;
Bertoldo from a window cried—" *They* fight ?
" Ah, Reggianelli ! silly ones, and weak ;⁽⁹⁾
" Your nails, i'faith ! will in your plunder stick."

XLVI.

At the rock's base the count his post defended,
Protecting the piazza * as he could ;
Athwart the pass he palisades extended,
Constructed of enormous beams of wood ;
Gherardo boldly on the right contended ;
Giberto too made every presage good
With strong machinery, and filled up the fosse
With heaps of earth, and faggots thrown across.

XLVII.

The fierce assault continued till mid-day ;
The fury of the conflict then subsided.
The count kept with his men, without dismay,
Though without victuals ;—much had been provided,
But when the citizens saw the foe-men, they
To lock the meat up in the rock decided ;
And when so many teeth, with hunger pressed,
Began to chew, they soon demolished raw and dressed.

* Fortress.

XLVIII.

They hunted every where, but nothing found,
 Nothing their constant craving to assuage ;
 They yawning crossed themselves with grief profound,
 So keen their hunger it increased their rage ;
 Some friars had built within that narrow bound
 A chapel, wooden-shoe-men, sharp and sage ;
 The count desired the senior to contrive
 Some remedy to save them all, alive.

XLIX.

The monk said gravely : “ God appears disposed
 “ To scathe the Reggians with his dreadful ire.”
 The count, half desperate, soon his censure closed
 By saying : “ No more preaching, Mister Friar.
 “ First seek the remedy, be that disclosed,
 “ For we are supperless, and food require.
 “ Relieve us, let us quit these walls in peace,
 “ And you may preach till doom’s day—now, pray cease.”

L.

The monk went out to try negotiation,
 And soon the ultimatum was received ;
 It was : “ The Reggians may take this occasion
 “ To go, without their arms !” and, thus reprieved,
 Many were gladden’d with the stipulation,
 But others laughed at terms they scarce believed.
 Go out without their arms ! what dire disgrace !
 They’d rather fight, and die than be so base !

LI.

Therefore the monk was ordered back again,

And then the count turned to him, gravely saying,
“ Father, I too must go, I can’t refrain ;

“ Give me a gown, my secret not betraying.”
The monk had one supplied, with many a stain
Of soup bedappled, and in this arraying
Himself, the count found his concealment easy,
It was the cook’s, and thence a little greasy.

LII.

Then to his people said the count: “ I go

“ For better terms, to gain a better fate ;
“ But if I find still obstinate the foe,
“ I shall remain without the castle-gate ;
“ And shortly reinforcements from below
“ Bring to your aid, if you have strength to wait ;
“ If—you have heart and soul to keep at bay
“ The vaunting enemy another day.”

LIII.

He left Canossa Guido in his place,

And took no arms, except a dagger keen,
Which he concealed within its dusky case,
Under his gown, and armour Garzerine ;
They found Gherardo on the intrenchment’s base,
Preparing ere the morn a massy screen
Of bar and palisade, both high and wide,
To close the portal-front, and either side.

LIV.

Soon as Gherardo saw the messenger,
He went to meet him ; and the friar said ;
“ The Reggian people think, that most severe
“ Are those conditions you proposed and made ;
“ If they may keep their arms, they will adhere
“ To any other terms upon them laid.”
Gherardo hearing this his wrath exprest,
And to the monk cried : “ Father, I protest,

LV.

“ That they shall now accept the terms I like,
“ Arms, banners, every thing shall they forego.
“ And in their doublets, underneath a pike,
“ Issue from out the gate—I tell thee so :
“ And swear it too ; hence, quick the bargain strike ;
“ ‘Tis not for me to give them favour, no !
“ If they delay, their punishment shall be
“ Increased, and worthy their depravity.”

LVI.

The count all anxious, hearing what transpired,
Said : “ By my faith ! you shan’t lay hold of me !”
And silently and secretly retired,
Until he found himself from danger free ;
The monk still humbly persevered untired,
In hopes of better terms, but uselessly ;
Therefore returned he back, all sad and sorry,
Without another interrogatory.

LVII.

Confused, bewildered, in extreme dismay,

Were all the Reggians, hearing what had passed ;
He told them all, the count had gone away,

He said till ample means he had amassed ;
And, in the interim, most intensely they

Considered whether they should still stand fast ;
Waiting the count's return, or in the night,
In arms endeavour to escape by flight.

LVIII.

All were agreed, to wait and see the count ;

But when they calculated all the pros
And cons, that he might not the full amount

Of men have ready, ere next evening's close ;
Each frowning wrinkled his sagacious front,

And said till death he would the foe oppose ;
All would die fighting ; Guido thence began
To put them under arms, and execute his plan.

LIX.

But from the rock, Bertoldo intimated,

To brave Gherardo, what was in the wind ;
The foe had shown a wish, he plainly stated,

To fly, all armed, and leave their post behind ;
Gherardo on the subject meditated,

And his resources rapidly combined ;
With torches and ignited pitch he made,
Night bright as day, then fixed his palisade.

LX.

Behold the gate is opened, hear the noise
And knocking of the famished, as they run ;
But the strong rail-work all their hope destroys,
Their flight, arrested just as it begun :
Gherardo front and flank his force employs ;
Weapons of dreadful power the Reggians stun ;
And with sharp missiles, arrow, spear, and stone,
The bravest and the best are overthrown.

LXI.

Gherard himself sprung forward with a mace
To the stockade, and did such execution,
That had the crowd not hurried to retrace
Their steps, and shut the gate, though in confusion ;
That night he would have made extinct the race
Of Reggian soldiers, terrible conclusion !
Guido Canossa was the first great loss,
Left to feed fishes in the ample fosse.

LXII.

But bold Foresto, where the palisade
Was rather low, his fiery horse impelled ;
And drawing desperately his shining blade,
Gherardo wounded, and then onward held ;
Still making good his passage, undelayed,
All opposition promptly he repelled ;
Till he got safely to a distant quarter,
Abandoning his troops to wounds and slaughter.

LXIII.

The Reggians, certain nothing could be done,

That further effort would be quite in vain,

And seeing how the enemy begun

To shake the gate, and call for fire amain,

Quickly sent back the friar, all risks to run,

Hoping to win Gherardo's ear again,

And better terms; nay any, for they knew

The warrior's wrath had been provoked anew.

LXIV.

Terms he obtained—and he was sworn beside:—

“Should any one of those evacuating

“Rubiera now, at the same inn abide

“With Modenese—if lodging, or but baiting;

“He shall *per onor* lay his shoes aside,

“Boots, and all covering to the feet relating.”

Then through a little wicket to the north,

The conquered in their doublets issued forth.

LXV.

Mars, who the faithful semblance still retained

Of Scalandrone, to enjoy the show;

And near the pike,* where passing 'twas ordained

The conquered Reggians their proud heads should bow,

Gave each a slap, 'twas any thing but feigned,

Under the pike—slow marching in a row;

Thus, one by one, till morn the orient greeted,

The hungry people from the rock retreated.

* See stanza fifty-five of this canto.

LXVI.

When all had passed Mars vanished from their view,
And left the troops amazed, in silent wonder ;
The victors were astonished that they knew
Him not at first, committing such a blunder !
The wretched vanquished were astonished too,
Because when morning burst night's veil asunder,
They found, with shame, the knocks they had to share,
Unhappily had made their caputs square.

LXVII.

Awhile Gherardo near Rubiera stayed,
To rest his people, honouring that day ;
And dedicating it, with great parade,
To Saint Bartholomew. Proud to display
The spoil upon the Secchia's banks, they made
A splendid trophy there without delay,
But when the sun through half his course had steered,
A messenger with sounding horn appeared.

LXVIII.

He said : “ hostilities have taken place
“ Between Sardinia's king and th' enemy ;
“ Who leads to war a much more numerous race
“ Than flies, or ears of corn, in Apugli ;
“ He therefore begs assistance in the case,
“ The peril being great, as you may see ! ”
Gherardo thirty hairs with rage plucked out,
And, cursing, moved the army on its route.

NOTES TO THE FOURTH CANTO.

1.

O ! genuine sons of Rome.

Stanza iii.

Modena was a Roman colony.

2.

My share the poor shall have in charity.

Stanza vi.

This, says Salviani, shows the great liberality of the Potta !

3.

Before them fly

An ass's carcase headlong from the sky.

Stanza viii.

Tassoni here applies the circumstance erroneously, on purpose of course. It was the Bolognese who threw a dead ass into Modena. See the Preface.

4.

Not far off, singing La Rossina bella.

Stanza xxi.

La Rossina bella is a little song familiar in Lombardy, which begins *Le belle chiome, e' ha la mia Rossina bella, fa-la-li-lela, viva l'amore, e chi morir, mi fa, &c.*

5.

He was descended from the good Frontino.

Stanza xxv.

Frontino is the famous horse of Ruggiero, and often mentioned in Ariosto.

6.

*The pointed sword, in puncturing the part,
Let out the wind, and cured him, spite of art.*

Stanza xxxvi.

A similar curative accident is mentioned in Pliny's Natural History, vol. vii. and the following case in point is from an American newspaper (1823).

An affair of honour a sovereign cure for the dropsy.—An intelligent traveller informs us, that some time since a Dr. Blanchard, of Alexandria, on Red River, challenged a Mr. Murray, an attorney, on some trivial account, who, at the time, was labouring under an abdominal dropsy. They met in the province of Texas, and Murray was shot through the belly. The dropsical matter was discharged, and the bowels, from the inflammation excited by the wound adhering to the peritoncum, a permanent cure was accomplished. The parties became friends, and the attorney remains grateful to the doctor, for this gratuitous surgical operation. We know of no law against shedding water, though there is one against shedding blood. If your medical colleges approve of this mode, it is to be hoped the candidates for M.D. will be carefully examined as to their skill in this novel mode of operation. We believe it is a fact generally known to medical men, that the intentional excitement of such a degree of inflammation upon the peritoneum as should be sufficient to produce adhesion between its surface, has, in one or two instances, succeeded in curing abdominal dropsy.—*Alabama Republican.*

The 71st story in the collection of Tales, by the Queen of Navarre, relates to a similarly accidental occurrence.

7.

Meanwhile Count San Donnino.

Stanza xxxvii.

Under the name of Count di San Donnino is figured the Marchese Giulio Fontanelli, a cavalier highly esteemed, and a contemporary of Tassoni.

8.

I speak of Salinguerra.

Stanza xxxix.

According to the history of Biondo this Salinguerra aided Ezzelino, the tyrant of Padua, in the conquest of Ferrara. In 1240, says Sismondi, a Guelfic army besieged Ferrara, where Salinguerra, the Ghibelline chief of that city, was shut up. This veteran, more than eighty years of age, after defending his country for a long period was treacherously seized in a conference, and sent captive to Venice, where he died five years afterwards in prison. Ferrara then became as obsequious and subservient to the Marquis d'Este, a chief of the Guelfs, as it had been previously to Salinguerra, a chief of the Ghibellines.

9.

Ah, Reggionelli.

Stanza xlv.

In some copies the line runs : *Oh Reggionelli dalla Bocalina*, the Reggians calling the urinal Bocalina.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.

*The fall of Castelfranco;—information,
By a Nuncio brought, describes the Bolognese
Upon their march; in full co-operation,
Their brave confederates and dependencies
Assemble; and next day make preparation,
To offer battle where the foe may please.
The Potta also issues on the plain,
And forms his squadrons for the great campaign.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

ALREADY had the time prescribed expired,
And still the fort Nasidio maintained;
By word and countersign his friends conspired,
To promise succour if he but remained;
The Potta hummed, the king's advice required,
What vengeance should be given for truth disdained.
The dawn was only glimmering, dimly veiled,
When, on a hundred sides, the fortress he assailed.

II.

The Germans and the Cremonese were there
By Bosio Duara thither led;
And horsemen, Modenese, tossing in air
Their banners,—o'er the field in legions spread;
The Potta his own troops inspired with care,
Promising cash, and honour too! he said:
“ The first who scales the walls, with struggle hard,
“ Two thousand golden crowns are his reward!

III.

“ One thousand to the second, to the third
“ Five hundred !” Therefore, running to ascend
And try their valour, so intensely stirred,
All feel like heroes ; boldly they contend ;
But the assailed, who cautiously inferred
What might, too surely, be their wretched end,
For breaking faith, and promises neglecting,
With desperate fury fight—their posts protecting.

IV.

They from the embattled walls now hurl a shower
Of stones and arrows, mortal and astounding ;
The assailants also with intrepid power
Move their machinery on, the foe confounding ;
The cross-bows make them all with horror cower,
Producing cruel harm, destroying, wounding ;
Soon as a bust popped up, ashamed of masking,
’Twas most exactly hit by Mastro Pasquin.⁽¹⁾

V.

I do not think the Greek geometrician,
Old Archimedes, showed superior skill ;
Among the deeds the Muse with nice precision
Records, she speaks of one he chanced to kill ;
Bastian da Sant’ Oreste—in derision
This jester turned his back, contemptuous still ;
So Pasquin quickly, nothing could protect him,
Drove an unerring dart right up his rectum.

VI.

Three times the dreadful storming was renewed,
Successive squadrons to the attack repairing ;
Within the ditch, and on the walls were strewed
Dead bodies numberless—with eye-balls glaring ;
When fierce Ramberto scaled, with fortitude,
The rock, and snatched the standard, proudly flaring ;
Meanwhile his troops, with arrows sharp and true,
Made clear the battlements, and windows too.

VII.

Sandrin Pedoca, Luca Ponticel,
And Battistin Panzetta—all were near ;
Alas ! the second by an arrow fell,
Shot by del Gesso—christened Berlinghier.
But see Ramberto now the summit scale,
Confronted with the captain ; not with spear,
But hedge-bill armed, Nasidio ran with speed,
To yield assistance in that hour of need.

VIII.

Soon as his foot was on the embrasure,
He fixed his standard, and his shield opposed
Against Nasidio ; who, to make more sure
His blow, with both hands round the hedge-bill closed,
Struck him and threatened a discomfiture ;
The shivered corslet left the arm exposed,
And wounded. Thus, Ramberto partly foiled,
Poison and fury in his bosom boiled.

IX.

He darts upon Nasidio, ⁽²⁾ fiercely grasps

His sinewy throat, and then his loins amain ;
Nasidio likewise his opponent clasps,

Throws down his hedge-bill to augment the strain ;
On this side and on that like foaming asps

They struggle, tug, the mastery to gain ;
Their limbs are twisted round each other tight,
Now to the left they roll, and now the right.

X.

Nasidio roared :—" Release me—take him off,

" Or I shall perish in his dragon-fold,"
The other, furious from the first rebuff,

Uplifted him with might ; firm in his hold
He kept him hanging on the brink,—enough ;

Then forthwith plunged below—below they rolled ;
Ovid's descendant falling through the air,
" Gesù" exclaimed—" I am going—Lord knows where !"

XI.

Down in the fosse, deep at the very base

Of the assaulted fortress, there was thrown
A mass of putrid dung, it was a place

The filthiest that perhaps was ever known ;
There both together fell—'twas hard to trace

Their dress or figure—injury there was none,
Saving a savoury plunge of stink and stain ;
For soon they viewed the heavenly sphere again.

XII.

The contest is renewed with furious heat,
Like two mad forest boars with hatred burning ;
Splashing amidst the mud they grunting meet,
And gnash their crooked tusks, submission spurning ;
But the Potta's men beheld the desperate feat,
And to them without ceremony turning,
From the proud conqueror they bore away
Nasidio, captive, in profound dismay.

XIII.

Before the Potta was Nasidio brought,
And he was punished with extreme severity ;
In memory of engagements set at nought,
And as a right example to posterity ;
To his prodigious nose with wire, red-hot,
A badge was stuck with surgical dexterity ;
Giving a further proof of the *success*
Of his perfidious tricks and wickedness !

XIV.

Meanwhile the flag, with which Rambert ascended,
And planted on the battlements, was spread ;
Sandrin and Battistin their charge defended,
And many others by the example led ;
But on that spot so vigorously contended
The enemy's troops, and still the struggle fed,
That there the tug of war was terrible,
And none could get into the citadel.

XV.

Behold upon the fosse suddenly rose

The Queen of Love, to great Voluce's sight !
Hid in a golden cloud, she sparkling glows,

And stimulates him to pursue the fight ;
Shows him the captive leader, and his foes
Assembled, full of terror and affright ;
All on the planted standard hang their fate,
And the dire conflict at the abandoned gate.

XVI.

This was enough, for soul magnanimous ;

Rekindled was his valour once again ;
Turning towards his soldiers, emulous,
He takes the flower, the choicest, for his train ;
Scours to the gateway gallantly, and thus
Inspires them all with terrible disdain ;
Attolino, Folco, Bagarotto, fly
To the same spot, and others urge—to die.

XVII.

Inflamed with fiercest wrath he fearless stood,

Upon the threshold threatening desolation,
And with his weapon struck the solid wood ;

The lofty portal shook to its foundation.
Others the ram, with mighty force endued,
Applied, and hurled, with such determination,
That bars and clamps were loosened by the shock,
And all around re-echoed to the stroke.

XVIII.

The frightened few who then on guard remained,
Cast stones, and propped up what was doomed to fall,
Afflicted by their fears,—their courage drained,
They peeped through slits and loop-holes in the wall ;
But from the blow, the shattered wood sustained,
Down dropped the bolt-work, barricades and all ;
And from the hinges great Voluce tore
The lofty gate at once, with a prodigious roar.

XIX.

As it occurs when that most sacred gate ⁽³⁾
Is opened by the Pope, five lustres o'er ;
When crowds from distant provinces await,
At Rome, the ancient Mother to adore ;
Useless alike is barrier, chain, or grate,
To stop the pilgrim-squadrons ; more and more
Roll on, a dreadful deluge, those who stop
Are smothered by the mob, and lifeless drop.

XX.

So at the enemy's gate, at once o'erthrown,
Impetuous forward rushed the eager crowd ;
And cries of blood and death, and many a moan
Of horror marked the passage ; and the proud,
Valiant, and timorous, met one destiny, one.
The victor scatters every hostile cloud ;
The vanquished flee, and skulking cede their arms,
And kneeling down, for mercy ask, in swarms.

XXI.

But they nor courtesy nor mercy find ;
In vain they plead, in vain they ask for life ;
The Potta Castelfranco has consigned
To be a lasting mark of coward strife,
And broken faith : revenge o'erpowers his mind,
No pity smiles where flame and sword are rife ;
Reduced to ashes ! towers so fair to see !
That loveliest castle in all Lombardy.⁽⁴⁾

XXII.

And now amidst the ruins, black and drear,
Down sits the victor-chief—awhile to rest ;
When lo ! a distant tumult meets his ear,
Resounding o'er the plain ;—'twas manifest
The enemy's battalions were near,
Knowing the peril his allies oppress.
And hence, the notes upon the breezes flung,
With horn and trumpet, hill and forest rung.

XXIII.

MUSE ! thou who sung the memorable deeds
Of the mouse-king, and gallant frogs of yore ;
So that they still through Heliconian meads,
Bloom with the same fresh beauty as before ;
Of the prond enemy who now proceeds
To war, the names, their bravery and power
Narrate ;—united closely to confound
The city for fine sausages renowned !

XXIV.

When fame had spread abroad the preparation
For the new strife, Bologna had begun ;
The noble enterprize and the occasion
Drew fourteen cities in defence of one ;
The empire trembled, and the church's station
Grew prouder, Italy seemed chilled to stone ;
And I believe the Mamaluke Soldan sent ⁽⁵⁾
News to the cuckow-king of their intent.

XXV.

The pope ⁽⁶⁾ was of the church and Guelfic side
The father and protector ; he had heard
In France the rumour, duly certified,
The cause, too, of the conflict was averred.
And his own faith and valour, often tried,
To show, he not a moment's space demurred,
But sent a nuncio ;—who from Austria came,
His own domestic priest, Querenghi was his name

XXVI.

He was a linguist, and a good one too ;
A famous bard in Tosco and Latino ;
An orator, philosopher, and knew
By heart the whole of Sainted Agostino ;
But he was not a cardinal 'tis true,
Because the pope thought him a Ghibellino.
After returning from the nunciature—he
Thus lost his labour and expectancy.

XXVII.

He was a Paduan, that too was not right;
Subject to Ezzelin, though free from blame; ⁽⁷⁾
The Roman pontiff never took delight
In trusting any of that luckless name;
But as a priest and courtier polite,
He, above others, was endeared to fame;
And thus by showing a wise man neglect,
The pompous pontiff gathered no respect.

XXVIII.

He left Vienna quickly by the post,
And passing midst the Alps a broken bridge,
The faithless horse his equilibrium lost,
And without one word to his lawful liege
Fell down;—beneath him was the prelate tost,
And he above upon the slippery ridge,
The nuncio thus thrown headlong from his pad, ⁽⁸⁾
Rose with a broken arm, an omen bad!

XXIX.

A litter then conveyed him on his way,
With shoulder out of architectural line,
And to Bologna got that very day
On which the troops were marching; the divine
Was forthwith robed in clerical array,
By old Don Santi, on the walls to shine;
There as he stands the squadrons by him stream,
Lowering their arms in token of esteem.

XXX.

And he, with open outstretched hand, above
The friendly concourse, courteously bestowed
His benedictions with most Christian love ;
Which from his heart spontaneously flowed ;
And when the people saw the crosses move,
They fell upon their knees upon the road,
Crying “ Viva il Papa, Bonsignor,
“ And death to Frederic the Emperor.”

XXXI.

But as his right hand was with splints confined,
He blessed them with the left ;—and hence they wrote
To tell the pope he had to them consigned
A wretched Ghibelline priest ; for so they thought.
Enough ;—the people, martially combined,
Went out, and first, Perugians of note
Three thousand—by the church commissioned there,
Led by Paulucci to that cruel war.

XXXII.

He from a courtier turned a soldier gay,
And Hugonots and Calvinists deserted ;
Made red the Scheld, and then he took his way
To France, and fought by Navarrese converted ;
He sailed the Danube, and his next essay
Was in the west, and higher schemes concerted ;
The Pyrenees he crossed, and went to Spain ;
And carried back by sea gloves of Ocagn.

XXXIII.

His golden armour had a splendid gloss,
And various hues composed his upper vest;
So gracefully he tripped the field across,
That he seemed dancing, dancing too his best.
A proud and desperate band, of men the dross,
He led, such men as equally detest
Both enemy and friend; and only love
In deeds of blood and vengeance to improve.

XXXIV.

The banner of Milan was next, and brought
In shoe and saddle numerous people, bent
On plundering prog; and they, by hunger wrought,
Made tripe and fritters dear where'er they went;
Bold Tagliapelle, Marion di Marmott,
Led on six thousand foot, to battle sent;
A thousand horsemen had two captains bold,
Martin di Torrian young, and Galeazzo old.

XXXV.

The third bright standard was the Florentine,
With horse and foot five thousand, fresh and flaunty,
Led forward by Antonfrancesco Din,
And Averard di Baccio Cavalcanti;
Then partridge was not known, nor marzolin,
Nor turkey, nor the rich wine of Chianti;
Their victuals were tough cheese, and nuts, beside
Chesnuts and apples, in the sunbeams dried.

XXXVI.

Of these they had, in bags and baskets, laden
A thousand asses when from home they parted,
That hunger might not their battalions deaden,
And the rough travelling make them sickly-hearted.
But they the sumpter-beasts with care had spread on
Gay painted cloths, which other thoughts imparted,
For at a distance from above, below,
Truly superb and pompous was the show.

XXXVII.

But still more numerous was the fourth division,⁽⁹⁾
And beautiful and charming to the sight;
The Donna of the Po with prompt decision
Had sent her choicest warriors to the fight;
Resplendent youths, elated by ambition,
Were under arms, in lace and purple dight;
Glittered the gold, and helmets sparkles cast,
As the intrepid foot and horsemen passed.

XXXVIII.

Three thousand cavalry, and twice that number
Of foot trod mother Earth, and made her groan;
Maurilio Turchi led the tramping lumber,
Bevilacq Borso led the horsemen on;
But far o'er all who did the roads encumber
With succours for Bologna, proudly shone
The towering Salinguerra, glorious knight!
At whose great name earth trembled with affright.

XXXIX.

He 'd lately of Ferrara got possession,
And to the church his enmity betrayed ;
Yet the Bolognians by great intercession,
And weighty gifts could only gain his aid ;
The muncio who 'd receive the right impression,
Held over him his hand, but still delayed,
Till he had passed, and then the cross he signed ;
This Salinguerra saw, and scornful looked behind.

XL.

Him the best troops of low Romagna follow,
All volunteers, preferring his command ;
Lugo, Argenta, Massa, Bagnacavallo,
Colognola, and Barbian, hero-land ;
These with the others joined were not so small a
Contingent ; but, as he with judgment planned,
They soon were parted ; Faccio di Milan
Was captain of the foot, an honest man.

XLI.

Now Cervia and Ravenna, under one
Bright banner pass successively, with spears
And spits armed lightly, each a champion ;
Guido Polenta as their chief appears,⁽¹⁰⁾
The numerous host of Cervian troops had thrown
A shade o'er many a furlong, if the fears
Of noxious air had not removed them thence,
O'er all the world, as from a pestilence.

XLII.

The infantry in gallant order passed,
And then a troop of warriors in succession ;
On foot two hundred, and three hundred classed
As men *inhorsed* (a Florentine expression) ;
Upon a fine bay horse of noble caste,
Ravenna's Signor led the grand procession ;
The courser had a star, one foot was white,
And pranced along the plain with proud delight.

XLIII.

With the sixth standard followed Rimini ;
The second son of Malatesta led ⁽¹¹⁾
One thousand horse, one thousand infantry,
His fate to lovers a sad tale conveyed.
Unhappy youth ! how shrunk with misery ;
His pallid mien and lovely looks displayed,
Engraven deep, the flame consuming life,
Which glowed within him for his brother's wife.

XLIV.

To him Francesca gave the golden chain,
At parting-time, from which his sword was hung ;
The wretched lover gazed at it with pain,
Adding new pangs to those his heart had wrung ;
The more he sought to fly the luscious bane,
The firmer he was bound, the deeper stung ;
His furious passions mastered reason quite,
And counsel then was useless in his sight.

XLV.

- “ Why, Mistress,” said he, “ Mistress of my heart !
“ Bind me again, and with your own sweet hand ?
“ Did not the other chain perform its part,
“ The chain of love, by which I captive stand ;
“ Captive to peerless beauty, without art ;
“ Haply my woe you will not understand.
“ Mad, mad, I am, all mad ; I own it true ;
“ But who has drawn me from myself but you ?

XLVI.

- “ You with those speaking eyes gave hope to mine,
“ When you perceived the lambent flame of love
“ Sparkle and meekly ask at beauty’s shrine
“ For pity, saddest torments to remove ;
“ But why, alas ! why do I thus repine,
“ As if my own ingratitude to prove ;
“ And take ungraciously, with spirits broken,
“ From one so fair, so dearly loved a token ?

XLVII.

- “ Spoil of my mistress, beautiful and rare !
“ By her bestowed, come, come along with me ;
“ So that her love may still my soul ensnare,
“ Binding me up in chains eternally ;
“ Thou shalt renew my hope, and crush despair ;
“ And thou a solace to my pain shalt be !”

Kissing it o’er and o’er again, he goes,
And every kiss alleviates his woes.

XLVIII.

The love-lorn youth passed on, and close behind
The people of Faenza, gentle, good,
Excepting two, the menial grooms, assigned
To Capitan Fracassa, of the blood ⁽¹²⁾
Of brave Manfredi, honoured by mankind,
In that degenerate age a rock he stood ;
With him six hundred and a hundred more,
Arms of the finest manufacture wore.

XLIX.

Then came Cesena, under the command
Of Maynard Susinana, who had made
Himself a Signor, aided by his band,
Wicked and impious ; rapine was their trade ;
He had eight hundred, each a bold brigand,
Accustomed to a life of toil ; he said
He had no horsemen, but his infantry
Were better than another's cavalry.

L.

The ninth division were the Imolese,
Petro Pagani led them full of bravery ;
A thousand and a hundred Bandarese,
Pickpockets, thieves, and adepts at all knavery ;
And after them the gallant Forlivese,
By Ordilaffs reduced to utter slavery ;
Scarpetta was their chieftain, and no other,
Because, they say, he was the elder brother.

LI.

Next followed Forlimpopoli, and then

A city no less famed, no less renowned;

Sinbald, the younger brother, led his men

Under another banner, they were found

To be eight hundred, armed with bows, and ten

Good hundred more the others, o'er the ground

They marched, as in review, with vast precision,

Which showed their gallant hearts and fine condition.

LII.

With Fano's people at the back of these,

Sagram Bicardi to the Nuncio bowed;

And led a thousand foot, upon the seas

Well practised pirates. Fossombruno proud,

Pesaro, and the neighbouring Senigaglese,

Fidelity to Malatest avowed;

And with the flag of Paulo hurried on

To the sixth squadron, thus their speed was shown.

LIII.

The choicest of Romagna having past,

Behold the waggon issue from the gate,⁽¹³⁾

Covered with glittering gold, and o'er it cast

The spoils and trophies of the dead; the great
Standard is there seen fluttering from the mast.

Escorted by a hundred horse in state,

And other valiant warriors give their aid,

By Captain Tognon Lambertazzi led.

LIV.

Twelve oxen of enormous stature drew
The waggon, three and three, their covering, gear,
And top-knots, scarlet silk—gaily in view
The Pretor of Bologna sat, and near
Him on the top his family, not a few,
Crowning the equipage, from front to rear;
Purple and yellow robes they all had on,
Cross-bows and hatchets o'er their shoulder thrown.

LV.

Filip Ugone Brescian was his name, ⁽¹⁴⁾
With double chin, or dangling dew-lap, graced;
He wore a gown, to which his rank had claim,
Of rustling stiff brocade, superbly laced;
The standard and the richly laden team
Were guarded by four hundred, duly placed
In pairs, their horse-apparel swept the ground,
From Brescia sent with loyalty profound.

LVI.

Then the Petronian infantry were seen,
With all their baggage, and machinery,
Twenty-six thousand strong, of threatening mien,
Led by the good Count Romeo Pepoli;
His arms of silver chaced with gold and green,
And Braccalon da Casalecchio; he,
Left handed, on his dexter shoulder held
His shield and cross-bow, in the battle-field.

LVII.

The infantry passed on, and after them

The horsemen, and three squadrons, formed with care ;

They were led on by Bigon di Gerem,

Among the best Bologna knew that war ;

And by Malvizzo's sons, each son a gem,

Perinto and Peritio, gallant pair ;

Unequalled and resplendent in command,

The most illustrious of the warrior band.

LVIII.

Bologna and Romagna to the fight

Poured all they could supply, and pushing on,

Seven miles along the road, encamped at night

In martial order, till the following dawn :

And when the windows for the king of light

Were opened to peep through and gild the lawn,

A thousand trumpets thrilled the aerial arch,

And, well refreshed, the troops resumed their march.

LIX.

They had not journeyed far, before they knew

Of Castelfranco's fall, by many a tongue

Repeated ; forthwith all the squadrons flew

In hopes of meeting with the enemy, long

Ere they had rested ; Salinguerra drew

Apart the right wing, whilst the left, as strong,

The Bolognese retained, thinking the king

Upon that side his gallant force would bring.

LX.

With Salinguerra were the Florentines
Firmly united, and the Milanese;
A squadron with them of the Perugines,
And cavalry, composed of Riminese;
Ravenna's Signor, and the Faentines,
Fano, Imola, and the Forlivese,
Pesaro, Fossombruno, Sinigaglia,
Kept in the centre part *della battaglia*.

LXI.

The waggon midst the Bolognese remained⁽¹⁵⁾
As usual, and was zealously defended
By numerons knights, foot soldiers, duly trained;
Machinery too for deadly acts intended;
Then moved the camp and order strict maintained,
And as the sun's bright coursers had ascended
The top of heaven, before the foe they came,
The plains and mountains echoing with acclaim.

LXII.

The Modenese now issuing forth appear,
From Castelfranco with heroic might;
Joined with Sardinia's king they boldly rear
Their standard, distant but an arrow's flight;
And place in front their bravest, free from fear,
Extend their flanks at once to left and right;
Pursuing thus a wise and prudent course
Not to be shut in by superior force.

LXIII.

Upon the left a stagnant pond extends;

There, good four thousand bean-eaters obey
Bosio Duara, hungry-stomached friends;

He had not all the Cremonese that day,
But numerous chesnut-crunchers made amends,

Drawn from the mountains in their strange array;
The cavalry of good Manfredi hovered
About them, and both flanks completely covered.

LXIV.

In the right column to the southern breeze

The royal standard was unfolded; there
King Enzo stood, with his Garfagnanese,

And lowland tribes embodied for the war;
Right gloriously, with majesty and ease,

He looked, his upper vest with many a star,
And golden eagle trimmed; his plumes were white,
And under him a steed impatient for the fight.

LXV.

The royal youth had not his nineteenth year

Attained, and yet he half a giant seemed;
Flaxen his hair, he was without compeer

In mien and valour; where the battle gleamed
In horsemanship, in letting fly the spear,

In running, swift of foot, a wonder deemed.
With lance or sword in tourney, or the field,
The palm to him all rival warriors yield.

LXVI.

On every side he bustles, and excites

His wretched rogues to die without a fear!

But in the midst the furious Potta bites

His hands, because Gherardo is not near;

And then he Tommasin Gorzan invites

To lead the Modenese on foot; and here

It was a bad exchange, upon my life!

To give a stick the office of a knife!

NOTES TO THE FIFTH CANTO.

1.

'Twas most exactly hit by Mastro Pasquin.

Stanza iv.

Pasquin Ferrari, mentioned in the third canto.

2.

He darts upon Nasidio.

Stanza ix.

Nasidio, the commandant of Castelfranco, mentioned in canto 4, stanza 9. He was famous for his long nose, and called a descendant of Ovid, because the name of the Latin poet was Ovidius Naso.

3.

That most sacred gate.

Stanza xix.

The opening of the Porta Santa la Vigilia di Natale. On that day commences the jubilee, instituted by Boniface VIII. in the year 1300, which ordained that the gate should be opened every hundred years. Clement VI. reduced the period to fifty years, in imitation of the institutions of Moses in Leviticus. Finally Paul II. restricted it to twenty-five years, or five lustres, as mentioned by Tassoni. This was confirmed by Sextus IV.

4.

The loveliest castle in all Lombardy.

Stanza xxi.

This castle was built by the Bolognese in 1226. It was often destroyed and rebuilt.

5.

And I believe the Mamaluke Soldan sent.

Stanza xxiv.

A sneer upon the names *Mammalucchi* and *Cucchi*, used vulgarly in Lombardy, as meaning stupid, foolish, silly.

6.

The Pope.

Stanza xxv.

Pope Innocent IV. of the noble Genoese family Fieschi, and who twice excommunicated the Emperor Frederic. He was the first who gave red hats to the cardinals.

Line 3.—The pope was then at Lyons in France.

Line 8.—Querenghi of Padua.

7.

Subject to Ezzelin.

Stanza xxvii.

Ezzelin, tyrant of Padua, was a bitter persecutor of the church, and of the Guelfic party.

8.

The nuncio thus thrown headlong from his pad.

Stanza xxviii.

A fact, only misplaced in point of time. The accident occurred to this prelate at Scarperia, on his way from Rome to Parma.

9.

But still more numerous was the fourth division.

Stanza xxxvii.

Speaking of Ferrara, near to which runs the Po, poetically Donna del Po.

10.

Guido Polenta as their chief appears.

Stanza xli.

Guido da Polenta was the father of Francesca da Rimini.

11.

The second son of Malatesta.

Stanza xliii.

Paolo was the brother of Lanciotto. Dante gives a powerful abstract of the story, which has been amplified by Mr. Hunt in his poem called Rimini.

12.

Of the blood

Of brave Manfredi.

Stanza xlviii.

The Manfreds were lords of Faenza, as the Poleatas of Ravenna.

13.

Behold the waggon issue from the gate.

Stanza liii.

The first who used the carrocio, chariot, or waggon, were the Milanese. It was a huge car drawn by many pairs of oxen or bullocks, in which they placed all their ensigns in going to war, and which was guarded by a choice troop of the bravest soldiers in camp. The carrocio is still used by the Modenese.

Antonio Lambertazzi, and Ludovico di Geremia, were the

two principal chiefs of the people of Bologna in the days of Enzo.

14.

Filip Ugone Brescian was his name.

Stanza Iv.

Really Podesta of Bologna at that time.

15.

*The waggon midst the Bolognese remained
As usual.*

Stanza lxi.

The carrocio was placed near the left wing, or in a part where it was the least liable to be taken by the enemy.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO SIXTH.

ARGUMENT.

The armies meet, and Salingucerra goes

Against the enemy's right ;—Enzio assails

The left, triumphantly he overthrows

The Pretor, Waggon, Standard ; but he fails,

When by his troops abandoned ;—then his foes

Surround him, and his capture turns the scales.

Perinto combats nobly,—Bacchus dissembles,

And at his horrid form the Potta trembles.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

High in the heavens Astrea was dividing
With balance nice the fleetly rolling day;
When both the armies moved at once, deriding
Each other, ready for the dreadful fray;
Plain, valley, mountain, seemed with echo chiding,
And bank and forest rolled the sound away;
Bellowed the woods, each gurgling river's bed,
And Apennine's huge masses shook with dread.

II.

As in the Straits, where erst the Son of Jove ⁽¹⁾
Divided ocean from our dark blue sea:
If tempests fierce their glassy waters move,
The proud waves roar and burst tremendously;
Now horrid gulfs appear, and now above
Swell foaming mountains, terrible to see. [der;
Tremble the shores, heaven burns, midst lightning, thun-
Such was the meeting of the camps;—no wonder.

III.

The hail of flying arrows gloomed the sky,
And quenched the brightness of the solar ray;
Whoever views with picturing memory's eye
The annual splendours on St. Peter's day; ⁽²⁾
From Adrian's famous mole, which towers so high,
How storms of rockets blaze in every way,
Let them think this a thicker, denser veil,
Than e'er from heaven on that occasion fell.

IV.

The awful crash of host encountering host,
Of neighing steeds, spears breaking; seemed around
As from the Alps, the woods up-torn and tost
Suddenly down, had made the vales resound;
Distance and interval were wholly lost,
And mid the strife no passage could be found;
The lovely meads already groaned with fear,
And Death usurped the plain in full career.

V.

Now pushes, drives, now turns, and retrocedes
Alternately each squadron; where one fails
Another squadron instantly succeeds,
And thus its previous losses countervails;
As turns the first, another forward speeds,
Like wave on wave, and for a time prevails;
The captains zealously, in every place,
Urge on the brave, and stimulate the base.

VI.

“ Vain men !” said Salinguerra, “ ye who dress
“ In arms for ornament, and ostentation ;
“ Where are your swords, your hands to gain success,
“ The ardent heart that throbs with emulation ?
“ If you among these rustics fear to press,
“ Men without arms, discipline, animation ;
“ How can I hope this day to see you fired
“ With love of fame,—with glorious deeds inspired !

VII.

“ This is the path to glory, this the way !
“ Ye, who have souls of honour, follow me ;
“ I burst the passage, fill it up who may ;
“ Who fights to be immortal we shall see !”
Thus spoke the champion bold, and dashed away
Amidst the thickest of the enemy ;
Couching his lance he flew with loosened rein,
And looked a tempest rolling back the main.

VIII.

Some, wounded in the face, and some the breast,
Fall by the encounter of the spear, unseen ;
The thickest ranks are thinned ; the bold repress ;
And each unceasing tries himself to screen.
He meets Stefano, puts him to the test,
And bores his right eye with his javelin keen ;
Next Ghino tumbling falls, pierced through the throat,
Then Brandan da Baschier, a man of note.

IX.

Brandan, his mouth had rashly opened wide
That instant, to insult his valiant foe;
When the relentless iron, well applied,
Rattled between his teeth and laid him low;
The spear drawn out, the warrior turns aside,
And gives Ilario a tremendous blow;
The youth, while living neither bold nor brave,
Extended falls, a common ditch his grave.

X.

Count di Calagna not far off he sees,
Pompously armed and proud of his attire;
And thinking him a hero, scorning ease,
Spurs on against him with an eye of fire;
But the count's courage soon begins to freeze,
Behind his horse preferring to retire,
Till the lance passes; then he grasps the mane,
And lightly springs into his seat again.

XI.

Who ever saw a monkey dart away,
From the rude stroke of wayward child, and then
With quick and agile leap, as if in play,
Come back, and briskly show itself again;
So when the spear was quivering for its prey,
Down stooped the count, accustomed thus to feign,
And with the same agility he rose,
As if he were another, to his foes.

XII.

He turned to Bernardin Manetta straight,
Who stared at him with laughing countenance ;
“ Troth,” said he, “ I have shunned a heavy fate,
“ And must again be careful of his lance ;
“ I left my saddle in a needful state ;
“ And he who watched me with an eye askance,
“ Drove my horse sideways on me ; wretch, I say !
“ But, woe to him, if he should cross my way.”

XIII.

Thus saying to the left he quickly sped
Where his advancing Florentines were seen ;
Thinking, perhaps, the battle to evade,
But when he saw Antonfrancesco Din,
Oppose them with his cavalry brigade,
He to his soldiers said with haughty mien :
“ Let us retire, my friends ! for, I declare,
“ To fight with such a few would not be fair.”

XIV.

Roldano hearing him turned sharply round,
And struck him with the butt end of his spear ;
And said : “ Thou scum of madmen, pluckless hound,
“ Dost thou not blush with shame to snivel here ;
“ If thou’rt not still, or quittest not this ground
“ I’ll rip thy bowels up—by heaven ! I swear.”
“ Be not so angry !” was the count’s reply,
“ I only spoke my gallant troops to try.”

XV.

Roldano only frowned—but that stern frown,
Shook every nerve and fibre of his heart;
Then spurring on his dapple, whose renown
Eclipsed in speed the wind, and feathered dart.
On youthful Averardo thundered down,
Whom he saw wet with hostile blood apart,
And giving him, an axillary wound,
Unhorsed him, and distained the flowers around.

XVI.

But Dini his battalions pushes on,
And loudly calls: “Ye cowards! fall ye back,
“ From the unaided bravery of one,
“ Who fighting leaves his troops behind? alack!
“ Courage! why stare ye, are your senses gone?
“ Lately of gallant deeds you used to crack;
“ Then, like a melon, you resolved to slice
“ The world, and now the dog-days make you ice!”

XVII.

He ceased, and where Roldano's phalanx deep
He saw advancing, thither spurred his steed;
And with his sword at one tremendous sweep
The worthless Barisano's spirit freed;
And Teggia, who expected conquest cheap,
And like a frog to crush him, struck indeed,
Upon his helmet with a bludgeon stout,
But in return had both his eyes torn out.

XVIII.

Such is the battle and contention here!

Bat to the south the king with warmer zeal
Inspires his friends, dismissing every fear,

At once upon the enemy's left they wheel.
He shines a threatening comet, bright and clear,

With gold and trappings decked, from head to heel;
Surrounded by his German troops he stands,
And thus in accent barbarous issues his commands.

XIX.

“ Flower of the German empire, great of soul,
“ Now is the hour, and this the destined field;
“ When your immortal arms without controul,
“ Shall inextinguishable glory yield!
“ In you confiding through my bosom roll
“ Feelings of vengeance not to be concealed;
“ To day, upon these papists I intend
“ A horrible example shall descend.

XX.

“ Me, follow bravely, since the impious race
“ Have gathered all their strength, their utmost power;
“ Then shall our injuries in this very place
“ Be all revenged at once, this very hour;
“ If fame has charms, her winning charms confess,
“ If patriotism is now your honoured dower;
“ If ye did ever my dear father love,
“ This is the time your loyalty to prove!”

XXI.

He spoke, and couching his destructive spear,
With visor down amidst the foe-men rode;
And moved impetuously in front and rear,
As lightning blasts the oaks—then gushing flowed
The blood of Baldin, Lippo Ghisellier,
And Anton Ghisellardi o'er the road;
And Melchior Ghisellin, and Guazzarotto,
Who was the great grandsire of Ramazzotto.

XXII.

Giandino la Porretta, from Bologna,
Was bulky as a giant;—less perhaps;
And strangely for a war-horse rode upon a
Saddleless demon, without bridle-straps;
He seemed a Gorgon huge of Sant' Antonio,⁽³⁾
Nor did the monster feed on grain, but flaps
Of human flesh; his teeth could grind with scorn
Iron, and on his forehead was a horn.

XXIII.

The horrid beast four Germans had destroyed,
And was upon the fifth his stomach filling;
When the king drove his javelin through his side,
And pierced the heart, the pangs of death instilling;
The lance broke short, King Enzio then applied
His trusty sword, its office well fulfilling;
By one deep gash Giandon lost his head,
Just as he rose from where the monster bled.

XXIV.

Bigone di Geremia, at a distance,
Beholding the great carnage by the foe,
Rushed forth against the king, but the resistance
Of the Count di Nebrona turned the blow ;
The count had nearly finished his existence ;
He tumbled, but in rising was not slow,
Soon as he saw his sovereign forward start
Against Bigone—flourishing his dart.

XXV.

Bigone waited for the king, prepared,
But it was useless to oppose his shield ;
The sword divides it, and the helmet hard,
Springs off precipitately on the field ;
Redoubled are the strokes, the head is bared,
And severed from the trunk—his doom is sealed.
The ardent spirit, from its mortal load
Released, flies wandering to its first abode.

XXVI.

Bigone dead, the king defeats his train,
Nor does his wrath abate, nor linger there ;
Impetuously the flanks are turned again,
Broke, trampled on ; unknowing how to spare ;
Where'er his course is bent, a sanguine stain
Is left, dead bodies lie in heaps and far ;
The barbarous fury which inspires his mood,
Fills all the field with rivulets of blood.

XXVII.

The fatal wrath, still hurrying on the king
Followed by Garfagnines; he now is seen
Where the great waggon stopped, within the ring
Of guards, the rear battalions between;
With rush of thousand javelins every thing
Gives way, the guards are scattered o'er the green;
And from the waggon fiercely now is borne⁽⁴⁾
The famous standard, broken all, and torn.

XXVIII.

From Messer Filippo Ugone, Mayor,
Who deeply in astonishment was lost,
Some Garfagnines purloined the roquillare,⁽⁵⁾
And velvet cap so splendidly embossed;
Half dressed, and jumping down, he groaned a prayer
For help and pity, but his prayer was crossed;
Into a ditch plunged headlong by a thwack,
He fell, the clattering waggon at his back.

XXIX.

The asses which the chesnuts had conveyed
For the sharp-stomached Florentines, were feeding
At a short distance, in a flowery glade;
When the keen Germans, roguish in their breeding,
With hungry Garfagnines forthwith displayed
Their thirst for booty; to their task proceeding
Full tilt, and leaving, in their plundering,
Not more than thirty soldiers with the king.

XXX.

Sagacious Tognon in an instant knew

The wished-for hour of vengeance was at hand ;
And formed his scattered followers anew,

And told the two Malvizzis with a band
Of troops to intercept the plundering crew,

Who, utterly regardless of command,
Dried figs and roasted chesnuts were devouring ;
Then Enzo attacked—around his forces scouring.

XXXI.

The king on every side with consternation

Looked, and his peril equally beheld ;
His heavy heart was bursting with vexation,

He sees himself expiring press the field ;
But grief subsides, and rage and desperation

Impel him not without revenge to yield ;
He grasps his sword with more than mortal force,
And midst the thickest goads his fiery horse.

XXXII.

As the fierce tiger⁽⁶⁾ in the forest growls

Upon his prey, and, when by sportsmen found,
Uplifts his head, his eye with fury rolls,

Seeing the dangers that his lair surround ;
Then rushes on the hunters, foams and howls,

And his own blood and others stream around ;
So midst the enemy the king appears,
For a heart truly noble nothing fears.

XXXIII.

He strikes the first he meets, of Braganosso,
Of Pandragon Cac'nemico the son,
Divides the helm, the muscles, and the osso
Or bone, the face, breast to the navel down,
Then he abstracts the life of Min del Rosso,
Who had on ancient mail of some renown;
His grandsire purchased it, a man undaunted,
In France, and it was always deemed enchanted.

XXXIV.

The good sword could not falsify the charm,
But bent upon his horse the cavalier;
And running upwards, underneath the arm,
Passed through the throat, and issued at the ear;
Hence Mino fell, who never dreamt of harm,
By adverse fate the charm was conquered here;
Thus human wit opposed to Heaven must fail,
The one eternal and the other frail.

XXXV.

Meantime the king received upon the throat
And helm, two strokes, the worst *al gorgierino*;
The second was inflicted, quick as thought,
By Vanni Maggi, son of Caterino;⁽⁷⁾
But far the heaviest, which great anguish brought,
Was given by Gabbion di Gozzadino;
Who with a halbert, falling down like lead,
Removed the plumed *cinniero* from his head.

XXXVI.

At him then Enzo struck with gathered force,
Exact across the eyes the weapon went,
Cutting the head off in its bloody course,
One eye burst out at least a mile's extent ;
The brain was scattered thus without remorse,
The trunk stood still upright, the spirit spent ;
And when the horse found all control had gone,
He bore it round and round, by all unknown.

XXXVII.

But stops not here the furious sword, which bears
The mark of Lupa on its ancient blade ;⁽⁸⁾
It pierces, opens, crushes, mangles, tears
Whate'er it meets, arms, men in steel arrayed ;
Now here, now there, a grisly path it clears,
But numerous crowds successively invade ;
Now fly in air the severed heads and brains,
And spleens and bowels float along the plains.

XXXVIII.

Struck by a thousand lances, and surrounded
By thousand javelins, and a thousand darts,
All wet with blood, half killed, and half confounded,
Is that unequalled band of gallant hearts ;
Tognon reviles his men with rage unbounded,
And loudly cries—" Ye dregs ! of coward parts,
" To die so vilely—soup-destroyers—pullets,
" Bread with cross-bows should be crammed down your
gullets."

XXXIX.

The keen reproaches of that noble soul

Drove all against the king, with whom remained
Living but one, survivor of the whole,

Leopold Count Nebrona. Mark, restrained,
Pierced by a hundred spears the charger roll

Lifeless beneath the king, who, still sustained,
Thunders, and with two cuts Petronio
Kills, and—de' Carisendi Andalo.

XL.

Berto Galucci and old Gobbo now

Are on him, and inflict a cruel wound ;
But the great hero shrinks not at the blow,
Though they are horsed, and he upon the ground ;
The count, who turns and sees his sovereign low,

Springs from his saddle with an agile bound,
And gives his charger to the king, and dies
Amidst the strife, a noble sacrifice.

XLI.

The king attempts to mount, and holds the rein,

But Gobbo drags him back, and braves the fight,
And with his hump is stretched along the plain ;

Soon as the falchion glitters on his sight,
Tognon dismounts, and rushing on amain

Behind the king, grasps him with all his might,
And Francalosso aids the prize to win,
Fantucci, Berto too, and Zagarin.

XLII.

The king twists round, and swiftly runs his sword
 Into the paunch of Zagarin, but fails
To extricate himself; as with a cord,
 'Tognon still binds him—hostile strength prevails
Over the valour of Sardinia's lord;
 Periteo too the struggling king assails;
Now dragging, pushing, lifting, one and all,
But vain all efforts to escape the thrall.

XLIII.

As the wild bull, whose deadly horns and feet
 Unknowingly are bound by cunning hands,
Roars, bellows, writhes, and shakes, without retreat,
 Darts, pushes, struggles to unloose his bands;
At last subdued, afflicted with defeat,
 He falls exhausted on the trodden sands.
So the indomitable king, when he
Found all was vain, resigned despairingly.

XLIV.

The waggon soon was righted, and enthroned
 Was the Podesta on its roof, with grace;
But smeared with mud, his robe was lost, he owned,
 So he put on a cuirass in its place;
In scarlet stockings he was gaily domed,
 His breeches rather rent—he had a mace
A span broad in his hand, and well might pass
As sheriff of Ana and of Caifas.

XLV.

He roared in Brescian: "Forward—on—d'ye hear!

"Ye valiant men, the foe is ruinated;

"Make all them Germans cross themselves with fear,⁽⁹⁾

"Aggursed by God—and egscommunigated!"

Thus spoke he, and already saw the rear

Of the right column fly exanimated;

Wandering through sunny fields and meadow rigs,

Seeking to save their bellies for the figs;

XLVI.

Because the good Perinto had dispersed

The Germans, Sardis; every Corsican,

And others, who were anxious to be first,

At the alluring booty to a man;

The greedy Germans, who with keenest thirst,⁽¹⁰⁾

Had after certain casks a long way ran,

Thinking at once to gratify their wish,

Instead of Verdèan wine found salted fish.

XLVII.

At the first echo of the enemy's tread

The people of the sea turned tail to fly;

The Germans soon collected, and made head;

The Garfagnines stopt short, scarce knowing why.

But when the cavalry arrived, they spread

Furiously midst the trampled infantry.

Halbert, nor German pike, could then restrain

The armed horse; resistance was in vain.

XLVIII.

Upon Roncolfo, huntsman to the king,
Inspiring others in that mortal chase,
Perinto bends, and with a cruel swing
Pierces his visor, and divides the face.
Cuts with a backward stroke the tracheal ring
Of Gulielm Sterlin, brought up in Alsace ;
Ridolf d'Augusta, Giorgio d'Ascia found
Two stabs enough to hurl them to the ground.

XLIX.

A gallant stripling, born upon the Rhine,
And bred on the Panaro, named Ernest,
Whose lovely looks and countenance divine
Had oft the coldest heart with love imprest ;
Seeing his people all their posts resign
And flying, valour burning in his breast,
And thirst for glorious deeds, he nobly drove
On him a Nubian horse, his strength to prove.

L.

Perinto pausing waits for the attack,
And when the youth is near he makes him feel ;
The horse, not used to fencing, staggers back,
Soon as he hears the hideous clash of steel ;
Along the neck the falchion leaves a track,
And now behold the expiring courser reel ;
Ernesto finds him sinking on the plain,
And quits his seat with fury and disdain.

LI.

And with a stab he wounds him in the thigh;
Perinto turns, and gives another blow,
But he retires, of the encounter shy,
Behind an ancient holm-tree, bending low;
Perinto foaming bobs incessantly,
But he bobs back—at hide and seek they go;
Thus the poor lizard turns and changes place
When a sagacious spaniel gives it chase.

LII.

Captain Jaconia, the brave Soraggine,
Who more than his own life Ernesto loved;
When by him thus the hunted youth was seen,
To whom his soul as by enchantment roved,
At the last gasp too, with distracted mien,
Ran to his help by strong affection moved;
Abandoning his troops who, badly led,
Disbanded, broken, had like cowards fled.

LIII.

Approaching near, he found him deeply wounded,
In the right side, and overcome by pain;
Raising his sword, against Perint he bounded,
And with both hands resolved his blood to drain;
If from the helm the stroke had not rebounded,
Argon's, well-tempered, burst had been the brain;
But senselessly he staggered, and per force
Was borne, not knowing whither, by his horse.

LIV.

Jaconia then the lovely youth addressed :

- “ Ernesto!” said he, “ all our troops are gone ,
“ All routed, and dispersed ; and here we rest ;
“ Here, uselessly to lose our lives, alone.
“ Let us not fall together thus, unblest,
“ Thy innocent beauty, and myself o’erthrown.”
“ Go!” he replied, “ see there my charger lie,
“ For him I’ll be revenged, or, with him die.”

LV.

- “ Too ardent boy, unwary in thine ire,”
Rejoined Jaconia, “ that which now compels
“ Us to seek refuge, is a tempest dire,
“ Far more tremendous than thy youth foretels ;
“ If thy dead horse this anguish can inspire,
“ And vengeance for him in thy breast rebels,
“ Take mine!” He said no more, but on the plain
Dismounting, handed him the ready rein.

LVI.

- Rejected is the gift, but whilst the friend
Entreats, and kindly urges the request,
Perinto comes his vengeance to extend
Upon Jaconia, with impetuous haste ;
Rapid as lightnings from the heavens descend,
His thirsty sword is desperately prest
Through heavy shield and cuirass—in a breath
He leaves Jaconia wounded unto death.

LVII.

Jaconia fell; a moment had not passed,
When brave Perinto, almost at his side,
Fell too—his fiery horse had gasped his last;
Cleft through the chest and heart, he floundering died;
Of his own safety heedless, rising fast,
Ernesto ran and, all on fire, defied
At half sword's length Perinto to the fight,
Soon as he saw his friend in such a plight.

LVIII.

Two strokes he gave the cavalier upon
The crested helmet, with such wildering force,
His body bumping was extended prone
Over the pommel, on the lifeless horse.
Then looking up towards the youth, Jacon,
Rose on his knees, attempting to discourse,
And said: "Ah do not perish in this strife,
"Leave me to die, and save thy precious life!"

LIX.

Truly he spoke, if the obdurate soul
Is ever able to distinguish truth;
Perinto sprung up, grasped his sword, to roll
A flood of fury on the audacious youth;
Jaconia, with that strength which at the goal,
The parting spirit ministered in ruth,
To disappoint the blow in air that hung,
Against Perinto his own buckler flung

LX.

But fatal was that effort, which the wound
Opened afresh—his soul gushed out in blood.
Shame! Shame! a truer friend was never found,
Who never fancied wine with water good;
The shield he flung, his expectation crowned,
It struck the arm uplifted, as it should,
And face, and chest, and hand, and wholly broke
The fury of the meditated stroke.

LXI.

But what avails it! if the stripling stays,
And adds fresh fuel to the dying flame?
Stroke follows stroke; he seeks with earnest gaze,
The opening of the mail to fix his aim;
Perinto burned with rage, fanned to a blaze;
He struck, the javelin through the belly came;
The mail of Hector, spell-bound every plate,
Could not have saved him from his present fate.

LXII.

Dying, Ernesto falls upon the ground,
And calls Jaconia, who unhearing lies;
A stream of blood empurples all around,
And bright day darkens in his lovely eyes;
The soul disdainful rushes through the wound,
And after its loved friend impatient flies;
On the first horse he meets, Perinto darts,
And new adventures seeks in other parts.

LXIII.

Nor even returns when he observes the flight,
Of those the Florentine booty tricked and cheated;
For he esteemed it victory vile and light
Chasing base runaways—dispersed, defeated;
But where the battle burns with lances bright,
Against the Potta speeds, as if—conceited!
He'd drink him in a draught, and render void
His city; in its dunghill all destroyed.

LXIV.

Retiring from the strife he Guido met,⁽¹¹⁾
With half a sword, and eke a broken head;
And going to his tent a cure to get,
By Tempest, his own barber, surgeon-bred,
He soon discovered in a funk and fret,
The people following Guido's hasty tread;
Advancing to them he began to bawl—
“ Turn back ! turn back ! or I will kill ye all ! ”

LXV.

Then at the standard-bearer, who was staring,
Sans ceremonie, in a disdainful way,
He gave a cut across the face, declaring,
“ 'Tis this that teaches people to obey.”
The man was killed—no more for banners caring;
Perint himself the standard to the day
Unfolds, the call each Ravignanian heeds,
And clamorously follows where he leads.

LXVI.

The Potta saw, returning to the war,

Those who 'd just scampered from the field afraid ;
And called to Tommasin, attending there :

“ Now, by thy mistress' life, thy goddess-maid ! ⁽¹²⁾

“ Go ! and attack that standard, in the air

“ Flickering and coming on us : be displayed

“ Thy skill and valour at this onerous time,

“ Against those wretched caitiffs, filth and slime !”

LXVII.

Tommasin answers not, but nobly braves,

Fired by that speech, the enemy's cohort ;
With a bold band of uncombed, dirty knaves, ⁽¹³⁾

Given up to gambling and to idle sport,
Cognomened Triganieri, guttling slaves,

Spontaneous foes of the Bacchetoni, in short,
A people who forget heaven's bliss, or rod,
And make their appetite their only god.

LXVIII.

With these brave Tommasin to battle went,

And, at the first encounter, haply killed
Gaspar Lunardi, Raspon's helmet rent,

And great Bianco's throbbing pulses stilled ;
When by Perinto he was double bent,

Struck with the banner-staff, no blood was spilled,
For on his valour Fortune smiled, to tell
That captured by a thousand swords he fell.

LXIX.

The captain lost, the followers' zeal subsided,

Seeing their disadvantage in the fight;

Still, they remained unbroken, undivided,

Returning in good order, not in flight;

The flag Perinto to Polent confided,

Polenta following like a gallant knight;

And having smartly Jotatan upset, he

Killed young Barbaute, son of Mazzaretti.

LXX.

But now the Potta, hearing of the fate

Of Tommasin, and, infinitely worse,

The sovereign of Sardinia's captive state,

Santa Nafissa he began to curse; ⁽¹⁴⁾

And mounting on a hillock elevate,

Gathered new hope, foreboding the reverse,

For he perceived, of order quite bereft,

The enemy's standard flying on the left.

LXXI.

And, resolute to see the battle close,

Descended, and his people's wrath inflamed;

When a tremendous horned giant rose,

And frightened him, as thundering he exclaimed:

“What are your thoughts? your valour useless grows;

“Retire or die; retire you may, unblamed;

“Behold! thine eyes I open—see the strife

“Of Earth and Heaven, confusion now is rife!

LXXII.

“ See ! fighting there, the impious Bellona,
“ All stained with blood, against your force contends ;
“ And there, the haughty offspring of Latona ;
“ How many to the shades of death he sends ;
“ Mars who fights for you, and against Ugone,
“ Fatigued and sweating his assistance ends,
“ Again collect your troops, be their preserver,
“ From the disdain of Phœbus and Minerva.”

LXXIII.

Here stopped the monster fierce, to disappear
Like sick men's dreams, of horrid shapes compounded :
And soon dissolved itself in empty air,
Leaving the Potta wondering and confounded ;
Bacchus to cause this overwhelming fear,
His form with hideous fantasies surrounded ;
Who after fighting with the god Apollo,
Was marching from the battle, beaten hollow.

LXXIV.

And looking out for a new enterprize,
That his good people might not suffer loss ;
The Potta was bewildered with surprize,
And signed his forehead with the holy cross ;
For he thought it a demon drawn in guise
Terrific, his poor mind to vex and toss.
In doubt he stood, then took a new direction,
And did, as mentioned in the following section.

NOTES TO THE SIXTH CANTO.

1.

As in the Straits where erst the Son of Jove.

Stanza ii.

The Straits of Gibraltar, where the Atlantic Ocean is divided from the Mediterranean, and Europe from Africa.

2.

The annual splendours on St. Peter's day.

Stanza iii.

St. Peter is the protector of Rome. Rome is called the city of Mars, Romulus having descended from that god.

Line 6.—The mole of Hadrian; now the castle St. Angelo. See *Rome in the Nineteenth Century*, v. iii. p. 171. The writer of that entertaining work gives the following interesting account of the castle and the fire-works of St. Peter's day.

The Mola Hadrianæ has been transformed into that chance-medley monster, the castle San Angelo; and so complete is the metamorphose, that I do suppose, if Hadrian were to come to life again, he would have some difficulty in recognizing his own sepulchre.

This proud fabric is an instance how completely vanity defeats its own ends. It was destined by Hadrian to hold his remains for ever. Had he chosen a more humble monument, his imperial dust might probably still have remained undis-

turbed. As it is, his ashes are long since scattered, his very name has passed away, and the place which was destined to be sacred to the memory of the greatest of the dead, now serves for the punishment of the vilest of the living; for about four hundred wretches, sentenced to the galleys, compelled to hard labour, and chained together like dogs in couples, are shut up here.*

The great fire-works from the castle of St. Angelo commenced by a tremendous explosion, that represented the raging eruption of a volcano. Red sheets of fire seemed to blaze upwards into the glowing heavens, and then to pour down their liquid streams upon the earth. This was followed by an incessant and complicated display of every varied device that imagination could figure, one changing into another, and the beauty of the first effaced by that of the last. Hundreds of immense wheels turned round with a velocity that almost seemed as if demons were whirling them, letting fall thousands of hissing dragons and scorpions and fiery snakes, whose long convolutions darting forward as far as the eye could reach in every direction, at length vanished into air. Fountains and jets of fire threw up their blazing cascades into the skies. The whole vault of heaven shone with the vivid fires, and seemed to receive into itself innumerable stars and suns, which, shooting up into it in brightness almost insufferable,—vanished—like earth-born hopes.

* The upper part of it also serves as a state prison for criminals of rank, and those who fall under the suspicion or displeasure of the Pope; for, although the representative of St. Peter can no longer hurl monarchs from their thrones at his nod, he can still shut up a refractory Conte, or Marchese, at his pleasure. A Pope, or at least an embryo Pope, once made his escape from it in a basket, and reserved his head, destined for the scaffold next day, for the future tiara; and poor Benvenuto Cellini, in trying to follow his example, very narrowly escaped breaking his neck, and did break one leg. Vide *Memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini*.

Wonderful as these fire-works were, and let not that name lead you to imagine they bore any resemblance to those puny exhibitions of squibs and crackers which we denominate fire-works in England, for nothing could be more different—wonderful as they were, the illumination of St. Peter's far surpassed them. It is a spectacle which, unlike other sights that are seen and forgotten, leaves a strong and indelible impression upon the mind.

3.

He seemed a Gorgon huge of Sant' Antonio.

Stanza xxii.

Alluding to the famous legend of the temptation of St. Antony. The paintings on this subject contain the most monstrous and horrible animal combinations imaginable.

4.

*And from the waggon fiercely now is borne
The famous standard.*

Stanza xxvii.

In the middle of the carroccio a long pole was erected, from which hung the standard, a white banner with a red cross.

5.

Some Garfagnines purloined the roquillare.

Stanza xxviii.

A satire upon the name of Garfagnines, or more vulgarly Graffignines, being something like Graffignare or Sgraflignare, which the Lombardians use as signifying robbing and plundering. The last lines of the thirty-eighth stanza of the seventh canto are more explicit.

6.

As the fierce tiger.

Stanza xxxii.

The original of this noble simile is in the ninth book of the *Æneid*, 551 :

Ut fera, quæ densâ venantum septa coronâ,
Contra tela furit, seseque haud nescia morti,
Injicit, et saltu supra venabula fertur.

7.

By Vanni Maggi, son of Caterino.

Stanza xxxv.

Vanni, for Giovanni, as Tognò, or Tonino, for Antonio, Lena for Maddalena, Sandra for Alessandra, Rita for Margarita, and Betta for Elizabetta.

8.

The mark of Lupa on its ancient blade.

Stanza xxxvii.

In Spain the most beautiful blades were fabricated. Lupa, to whom Tassoni alludes, was one of the famous makers.

9.

Make all them Germans cross themselves with fear.

Stanza xlv.

The line is not quite translateable verbatim. The Brescians call the Germans, Lanzi, the word in the original.

10.

The greedy Germans, who with keenest thirst.

Stanza xlv.

Tacitus gives them the same character. *Diem, noctemque continuare potando, nulli probrum.*

11.

Retiring from the strife he Guido met.

Stanza lxiv.

Guido da Polenta of Ravenna, and father of Francesca da Rimini, before mentioned.

12.

Now by thy mistress' life, thy goddess-maid.

Stanza lxvi.

For the love of the object loved every command is sweet and of easy execution. There was a Marquis of Mantua, who was deeply enamoured of a most beautiful lady. If, said she, he loves me so much, and is so desirous of following my commands, let him testify his passion by throwing himself into the Ticino, rolling by. Hearing this, he spurred forward his horse, plunged into the river, and was—drowned.

13.

*With a bold band of uncombed, dirty knaves,
Cognomened Triganieri.*

Stanza lxvii.

There were really in Modena these two classes. The Triganieri were a lazy set, who not knowing what to do, used to train carrier-pigeons, which often conveyed letters to the distance of fifty or sixty miles. Pliny relates that when Marc Antony was besieging Modena, and so strictly that not a soul could escape from the walls, a pigeon was dispatched with a letter, which brought succours from the Roman senate. Bacchetone is supposed to be derived from Bigot, whence Bigot-tone. Count di Culagna is called a Bacchetone, hypocrite, in canto iii. stanza 12.

14.

Santa Nafissa he began to curse.

Stanza lxx.

The Italian commentator says : In the famous city of Mifruhetieh, not far distant from Cairo, is seen the celebrated sepulchre of Santa Nafissa, who was the daughter of Zenulhebidin, and boasted of being related to Mahommud himself. The sepulchre of this Mahommuadan saint is said to be richly adorned.

END OF VOL. I.

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LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

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LA SECCHIA RAPITA ;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET :

AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM,

IN TWELVE CANTOS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN

OF

ALESSANDRO TASSONI.

WITH NOTES.

BY JAMES ATKINSON, ESQ.

TWO VOLUMES.

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LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.

*The Bolognese are routed on the right,
But still the victory in doubt remains,
Until fair Iris bends from heaven her flight,
And Mars is driven from the battle-plains;
Renoppia comes, and those in desperate plight
Reanimates; the brave Gherard sustains
His own battalions, and pursues the foe
Across the stream—the waves with crimson glow.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO SEVENTH.

I.

COUNT di Culagna valiantly had fled
From Salinguerra, as already sung;
And that fierce champion forward as he sped,
Having to earth both foot and horsemen flung,
Wounded Rainero, and stretched Bruno dead,
At once amid the hostile squadron sprung,
Brought by Volucè to the awful fight,
The first ranks showing but a sorry sight.

II.

Volucè when he heard it, and beheld
Bold Salinguerr his coward troops confound,
Darted upon his horse, for on the field
He then on foot was fighting;—quickly round
His sanguine path the stern opponents yield;
All shun his lifted spear and quit the ground;
To meet him then advances Salinguerr,
And running menaces a dreadful war.

III.

Burning with wrath, and frowning with disdain,
Advancing, both their lances placed in rest,
They meet, as winds upon the raging main,
Or thunderbolts when storms the skies invest ;
The glancing helmets flash and flash again,
The fields and forests, as with fear opprest,
Bellow at that encounter, and the dry
Javelins into a thousand pieces fly.

IV.

Both camps immediately made the sign
Of the holy cross, and stand, with wonder gazing,
Immovable and speechless in a line,
Forgetting their own danger ; when, upraising
Their swords, the heroes darting looks malign,
Wheelround, each battered shield with sparkles blazing,
And thundering onward with tempestuous rage,
Striking both right and left, at once engage.

V.

They did not stop and talk of honours won,
As usual with the ancient men of war ;⁽¹⁾
Nor boast their fathers, Moor, or Spanish Don,
But forthwith went to work, as wiser far ;
The splendid vests, that all embroidered shone
With gold ; the plumes and shields, and armour rare ;
These broken, bruised, and powdered into dust,
The scattering winds dispersed at every gust.

VI.

Count di Miceno midst a thousand blows,
Haply struck one on Salinguerra's brow,
Which dazzled him, that to his vision rose,
Moon, stars, the heavens, and Iris' glittering bow ;
At this the champion's beating bosom glows
Like fire, he lifts his drooping head, and now
Moves on to be revenged, but in his haste,
Turns, and discovers how his troops are placed.

VII.

Under their brave commander, following fast,
The gallant Ferrarese so far had gone,
That into dire confusion they had cast
The enemy's left—but that achievement done,
And seeing Salinguerra as they passed,
Encountered by Volucè, every one
Stopped short ;—the proverb has been often penned,
An ass's gallop soon comes to an end.

VIII.

Manfredi who had chased the Milanese,
All broken and dispersed, o'er field and plain ;
And who desired to aid the Cremonese
The Tuscans and Romagnians to restrain,
Well knowing by their arms the Ferrarese,
Who were engaging his own mountain train,
Turned himself to the squadron which he led,
And, pointing with his sword, indignant said :—

IX.

“ Look! look! these fickle people, pray behold!
 “ New leaders ever foolishly desiring;
 “ Now bowing to the pope, with whimsies bold,
 “ Dreaming of mitres—to red hats aspiring;
 “ Now mark the wretches, glittering in gold,
 “ How grand in arms and jewels, pride-inspiring;
 “ Let us, ye brave, rush on them, young and old,
 “ That ours may be the arms, the gems, and gold.”

X.

So saying, he goads on his willing steed,
 Draws his sharp sword, and lifts his bossy shield;
 And rushing on the enemy with speed,
 Thunders among them;—at all points they yield.
 As at a signal hounds of noble breed
 Give chase to a vile herd across the field;
 So those brave men upon their saddles vaulted,
 And valiantly the Ferrarese assaulted.

XI.

Manfred, of Pocointesta Pasqualin,
 Cut off, with a side stroke, the chin and *naso*;
 And left with half a skull-cap, what a sin!
 Piero Simòn de Gasparin Pendaso.
 Against him then with a tremendous din,
 His lance in rest, came Mazzarel Tommaso;
 But he was caught or hooked with an *uncino*,*
 By Archimedes d'Orf Cavallerino.

* A hook.

XII.

For he was hurrying, with a loosened rein,
Not thinking of attack from any side,
When Archimedes brought him to the plain,
By his prime hook, most dexterously applied ;
Tommaso seized the horse's tail to strain
And stop him, but the courser spreading wide
His feet, instead of comfits at a feast,
Kicked down his throat a dozen teeth at least.

XIII.

Giannotto Pellicciar with an *accetta* *
Split up the head of Gabrio Calcagnino ;
Obiz Angiar, and Baldovin Falletta
Were pierced, and killed by Gemignan Porrino ;
With one stroke of his club Anteo Pinzetta
Burst in the vizor-bars of Acarino,
Born of the illustrious stock of Gigliolo,
And of his nose made a *raviggiolo*. †

XIV.

But that, to Manfred, was a joke indeed,
The squadron is all routed by that hero ;
Golasso Trotti, and Gotfredi bleed,
Gualengui, Perondel di Boccanera.
And Rosso Riminaldi, from his steed
Is thrown, his throat cut deep—*alla gorgiera*.
Thence losing courage as the strife begun,
The Ferrarese disposed themselves to run.

* An axe.

† A sort of mince-meat boiled in paste.

XV.

Bold Salinguerra sees his people fly
From the victorious foe-men with agility ;
And instant checks his sword, though lifted high,
And says :—" Pray, Count, do grant me the civility ⁽²⁾
" To let me follow my good troops, till I
" Can bring them hither, to renew hostility ;
" For if I stay surrounded, as you see,
" You can't in honour, surely, fight with me !"

XVI.

Volucè answered : " Marquis, I must say
" The time is past, Orlando now is dead ;
" But if you really want to run away,
" I will not be discourteous, or ill-bred,
" Follow then, I insist not on your stay,
" And lose no time, since every soul has fled,
" And like the wind too, it appears to me ;
" But I, through grace, must bear you company."

XVII.

" That cannot be ;" then Salinguerr replied ;
" If you remain not I shall never go,"
And saying thus a swinging stroke applied
Upon the sconce of his uncivil foe ;
The count his stirrup lost, and slid inside,
Almost unhorsed by that bewildering blow ;
His lids fell, sparkles of a thousand dyes,
And lamps, and lightnings glittered in his eyes.

XVIII.

Then Salinguerra seized that moment, and,
Spurring his charger, quickly disappeared ;
And where Manfredi had dispersed his band
Of Ferrarese, his menaces were heard ;
He roared, and with the flat part of his brand
Struck some, some with the edge, and others jeered ;
But jeering, nor reproach, nor menace stern,
Had power to make one coward heart return.

XIX.

Meanwhile the count recovering, looked around,
And at a distance saw the foe again ;
After him he rushed on, and luckless found
The path shut up and all his struggles vain ;
Among the Ferrarese then, with a bound,
He furious sped, with anger and disdain ;
And made dismembered limbs and armour fly,
In bloody fragments quivering to the sky.

XX.

The shoulder-flap of Tebaldel Romèo,
And Bonaguida Fischì's arm, were lopped ;
And the left leg of Niccolin Bonlèo
Was broken off just when the buskin stopped ;
And Mastro Daniel di Bendidèo,
Astrologer, from this existence hopped ;
Killed by a stab, which showed, presumption quelling,
That Heaven laughs at the joke of fortune-telling.

XXI.

Volucè wonderful exploits achieved,
Killed thirty marquisses with his own hand;
For marquises at that time ('tis believed)
Any one for a dollar might command;
And some, their lost appearances retrieved,
Thinking to show themselves extremely grand,
By bringing titles of a certain prince,
Who for his profit put them up for pence.

XXII.

As when a cloud of starlings through the air
Is by a falcon first, or merlin chased;
If the fierce hawk, not often known to spare,
With hooked claws, amid the azure waste,
After a long pursuit, pounce on them there,
All is confusion, doubled is their haste;
Now they collect, now spread, and now extend,
And in long files, now down, now upward bend.

XXIII.

So the Po people who first flew before
The furious temper of Manfredi's ire,
Soon as Volucè brave amidst them bore,
Redoubled was their fear, all ice their fire;
With such disorder flying, and even more,
Among the Florentines they retire,
Carrying them in confusion and dismay,
From the inglorious field away, away.

XXIV.

Manfredi follows—standards, swords, and mail,
Where'er he moves in wrath, the plain o'erspread;
Volucè's arms in every part prevail,
He leaves behind him mountains of the dead;
Pippo de' Pazzi, Cecco Pucci fell,
Becco Stradini, Pier di Casa bled.
Bosio was with him—and with wings endued,
Tuscans and Ferrarese their flight pursued.

XXV.

But not thus fled the Perugines that day,
Nor the brave cavalry of Malatest;
For, on the contrary, as soon as they
Knew Bosio, by his gems and pompous vest,
They with a hundred hooks seized on their prey,
They hooked his arms, and sides, and head, and chest;
“Be gentle,” Bosio cried, “in this distress,
“Tear not my clothes—my valuable dress.

XXVI.

“Stop this rude dragging—I am vanquished quite,
“Pull me not thus, accursed wretches—stay—
“Confusion on ye, for this cruel spite;
“Base Perugines, to drag me thus away!’
So talking, the embroidery-loving knight
Was presently made prisoner, by the gay
Cornet of old Paulucci, who then tied
Him on a nag, to Crespellan to ride.

XXVII.

The capture of their leader soon excited
To fury and revenge the Cremonese ;
They sallied forth, and, gathering force, united
Their powerful squadrons with the Frignanese ;
But not a Perugine, their honour plighted,
Would stir ; as bravely stood the Riminese ;
By their own valour and their captains held
Immovable upon the gory field.

XXVIII.

Captain Paulucci now at Perdigone,
Brother of Bosio, who his charger slew,
Drew his good bow, *balestra da bolzone*,
And with two ribs broke, stretched him on the dew ;
Then with his brand he killed Ercol Pandone,
Who did not take it as polite, 'tis true ;
Because he was a veteran of three score,
And none had dared to take his life before.

XXIX.

Meanwhile Alessio di Pazzan, inflamed,
At good Omero Tortor made a blow ;
A noble captain, and historian famed,
Nourished in youth by nymphs of Isauro ;
But he himself by Rimini was maimed,
The javelin struck him, where I do not know,
But deep the iron went, and with such force,
That he, half dead, was tumbled from his horse.

XXX.

And now the victor sought his spoil to gain,
Where Aless turned himself, and dying said :—
“ O thou, that joyest thus to see me slain,
“ A harsher fate is thine, a gloomier shade ;
“ Thy end is near, thou canst not long remain,
“ Thy crimes are ripe ; shall vengeance be delayed ?
“ When least expected, comes thy mortal lot,
“ Thy fame shall be extinguished and forgot.”

XXXI.

Alessio then expired ; and Malatest
Withdrawing from the spoil, in dudgeon high :—
“ With this foul augury,” said he, “ thou mayst rest ;
“ Down, down, and with the devil prophecy ;
“ And take these gilded arms and silken vest
“ Along with thee, for I despise them, I ;
“ Together with the doom thou dost impart,
“ Fabler and wretched sorcerer as thou art.”

XXXII.

Thus saying he remounted, and returned
Amidst the fight, and paced the slippery ground ;
His heart, magnanimous, within him burned
At the shrill clang of arms, inspiring sound !
When lo ! his rear battalion he discerned
Attacked by furious Roldan, moving round
From the grim war, Ramberto too, all wet
In that exhausting strife with blood and sweat.

XXXIII.

Therefore against the fury of the darts,
Shot by the Alpine people, he withdrew
At once his bold equestrians, noble hearts!
Himself retiring to an inn he knew;
And old Paulucci too, on foot, departs,
Sweating and out of breath, and fanning now
With his broad hat, his fever to allay;
But finds it hard to get his troops away.

XXXIV.

For Becco, Vico, Peppe, Crancio, Lello,
And Tilè, Mariotto, Cecco, Bino,
And Miccia d'Erculan Montesperello,
Were killed, and also Cittol Oradino;
The captured were Binciuccio Signorello,
And Medè di Pippon Montemelino;
And Gelomia from his horse was flung,
First cultivator of his native tongue.

XXXV.

Dottor da Palestrina was o'erthrown
And crippled, by a sad decree of fate;
And by the iron of a javelin one
Eye was pulled out from Braccioforte's pate;
Poor Braccioforte, Death had girdled on
His sword that morning—short alas his date!
And the fierce Pluto had, to make him feared,
Placed on his chin his own terrific beard.

XXXVI.

But while the victory suspended lies,
And both camps are defeated, both subdued,
Two politicians quarrel in the skies,
Adverting to old injuries now renewed ;
Mercury defends the Sipa enterprize,
Mad Hercules battles for the Potta's good ;
Jove with decorum stands between, to assuage
Their keen disputes, and bridle in their rage.

XXXVII.

Now in the heavenly empire every star
Ceases to change the influence and the hour ;
Unusual splendour purifies the air,
The tempests, quenched in ocean, cease to lour ;
From his exalted throne that shines afar,
Thus speaks the regal god, the sovereign power :
“ Ye Deities why thus accelerate,
“ That which will come too soon, discord and hate !

XXXVIII.

“ Look, where the caverned back of Alps is made
“ To echo with the voices, loud and hoarse,
“ Of the Turrta and the Serchio, led
“ Between two bridges to unite their course ;
“ Two people between these, with ardour sped.
“ In cruel fight engage without remorse ;
“ And by the liberal use of teeth and hands,
“ Show themselves to be real Graffignans.

XXXIX.

- “ O, how much bark, stripped from the chesnut-tree,⁽³⁾
“ Will cover all the country, hill and plain ;
“ How many heads lopped from their trunks will be,
“ In such a cruel, such a dire campaign ;
“ Charon, fatigued, transporting those you’ll see
“ Killed, and descending to the Styx amain,
“ Will doubly curse the cursed fate that made
“ Him the eternal boatman of the dead.

XL.

- “ Here, to assist their people will be seen,
“ Running towards the hills, the Modenese ;
“ There, at the passes which in peace had been
“ Preserved, you’ll find in arms the shrewd Lucchese,
“ You *then* may mix in the conflicting scene,
“ You, Mercury, and mighty Hercules,
“ And show which is the most important part,
“ Cunning or vigour, natural strength or art.

XLI.

- “ A young Alfonzo and Luigi then⁽⁴⁾
“ With chins yet guiltless of the razor’s stroke,
“ With sword and lance shall crimson all the plain,
“ And wondering nations shudder at the shock ;
“ The squadrons will en masse turn back again,
“ Before those Paladins of France, all broke ;
“ And the besieged in the beleagured walls,
“ Through fear, will answer very savoury calls,

XLII.

“ Begging Count Biglia upon their knees
“ To come, the dreadful tempest to compose ;
“ Unfolding Filip’s standard to the breeze,
“ With a true Spanish brag in pompous prose ;
“ Then you may, with more reason, if you please,
“ Tear out your eyes, and break your heads with blows ;
“ Meanwhile pray cease, and let the struggle rest,
“ Between the combatants, half mad at best.”

XLIII.

He paused, and called to Iris, beauteous maid !
Spreading her humid tresses to the sun ;
“ Fly, O my lovely damsel !” mild he said,
“ And summon Mars this horrid strife to shun,
“ Until Gherardo and his sister staid
“ Arrive, by them the victory must be won.”
Iris without reply now downward bends
And quick from heaven upon the field descends.

XLIV.

She sees rough Mars, and speedful wings her way
Where he is fighting ;—tells her embassy ;
And then departing from the hideous fray
And mortal stink, ascends the balmy sky ;
Mars who observes both armies, as at bay,
Draws back behind the first rank cautiously,
And pressing to the rear,—his succour closed—
Leaves the bold Potta to his foe opposed.

XLV.

The Potta had the Faentines assailed,
And all their cavalry repulsed ;—in vain
Their painted shields and shining helms, they failed,
Before the whizzing darts which fell like rain ;
Giannoccio Naldi, Pier, were half empaled,
And doomed to rot upon the thirsty plain ;
The daring Potta with his own good spear,
Killed Mengo Foschi, Guilit Cancellier.

XLVI.

But after Mars withdraws his conquering aid,
His planetary influence changes sides ;
And bold Perinto brandishing his blade,
Comes furious with old Satan's rapid strides ;
The wearied Modenese are quite dismayed
By his tempestuous wrath, and, as subsides
Their zeal, down oozing to their nimble feet,
Resolve they on precipitate retreat.

XLVII.

The Potta full of rage and desperation, [pressed ;
Roared, raved, with tongue and hand his wrath ex-
But could not check by threat or exhortation,
The whelming terror which his troops possessed ;
At last obliged to bear the degradation,
He left the battle, woefully distressed ;
Though several times, before compelled to go,
He singly urged his horse amid the foe.

XLVIII.

Running, and traversing the river's bed,
Without his helm, determined to be first,
All dust and sweat the Count Culagna fled ;
And on the city like an earthquake burst ;
The wondering people heard their sentence read,
The king a prisoner, and the camp dispersed :
Old men and women at this intimation
Flew here and there, all pale with consternation.

XLIX.

The Ancients then immediately ran
To weigh the matter in the council-hall ;
Many proposed with countenances wan
To fly the city and abandon all ;
Others conceived it a much better plan
To seize on every thing, both great and small ;
And forthwith to the tower—when full, no doubt
The rest would be obliged to stay without.

L.

Against this Bigo Manfredino rose,
Then near to Carlo Fiordibelli sitting,
And said : “ What ! without bread and wine propose
“ To shut up men in towers, is that belitting ?
“ Such counsel from the silly ever flows,
“ Not tenable—and better pretermittling ;
“ If *my* advice your approbation meet,
“ Dig a deep well in front of every street,

LI.

“ And spread it over, that the enemy
“ May fall in with a crash, whene’er they come.”
Guarnier Cantati said: “ And when shall we
“ Finish this task, and thus our foes entomb?
“ Is it not better to concur with me,
“ And take the dung which occupies such room
“ Throughout the city,—every place one meets,
“ And with it wholly shut up all the streets?”

LII.

Ugo Machella laughed at this conceit,
And said to those about him with a grin:
“ If we shut up in this way every street,
“ Pray how are our own people to get in?
“ Let us take arms, the foe-men we shall beat,
“ Heaven favours bravery, gallant hearts must win.”
Here every one rose up with warmth and pride,
And, “ Faith! ’tis true—on—forward!” fearless cried.

LIII.

But all the shop-men running quickly forth,
The various city-passes to secure,
With beams, and pales, and branches, stones, and earth,
Raised banks, entrenchments, walls, to be more sure;
For streets and smoky lanes there was no dearth
Of good defence, a storming to endure;
And then in that extremity, by scores
They briskly emptied out the common sewers.

LIV.

Meantime in arms refulgent there appeared
Renoppia, when the dreadful news was told,
Running towards the gate—the path she cleared,
Leading her gallant troop of virgins bold;
The courage of the men she smiling cheered,
And well the women's diffidence controlled;
But looking forward with a steady eye
She saw not any of the vanquished fly.

LV.

Dubious she stood, and for the count inquired,
But the good count had gone another way;
Therefore deliberating she retired
To the Panaro bridge without delay,
To know the truth—her aid was there required;
Arriving at the mellow part of day,
She gazed with sorrowful and saddened mien
Upon that dark and melancholy scene.

LVI.

Mid the deep-rolling stream both foot and horse
Were floating, floundering down confusedly;
The waters were all turbid in their course,
With human blood, arms sparkling flitted by;
On the left bank the Potta's beaten force
Were flying from the Bolognese, and high
Tognon and Periteo o'er them rose,
Dealing with sharpest swords their sharpest blows.

LVII.

By Periteo's hand were given to fate
Guron Bertani, Baldassar Guerino,
Antonio Porti, Jacop Sadolett ;
He wounded Antenor di Scalabrino,
But proud Tognone promptly overset
The troops of Ruffion, and Ravarino ;
'Twas only by superior penetration
Gherardin saved himself on that occasion.

LVIII.

The brother wounded, and a *prigioniero*,
Gave up his arms to the ferocious knight ;
When lo ! upon the bridge a cavaliero
Thundering with voice and sword, now puts to flight
The Modenese ; against that haughty hero
The Potta singly stands opposed in fight ;
And tries to stop in part his wildered troops,
Already broke, and scampering off in groups.

LIX.

Renoppia comes, and anxiously discerning
In most disgraceful route her good allies,
With cross-bow ready bent, her features burning
With shame, and anger flashing from her eyes :
“ O infamy ! most infamously earning ;
“ Fly to the city and without disguise,
“ Say that her sisters and her daughters here
“ Die in her cause, whilst you escape in fear.

LX.

“ Yes, here alone we ’ll perish gloriously ;
“ Go, save your wretched lives, too long you’ve tarried ;
“ Your crying ignominy shall not die,
“ Nor with us shall our honest fame be buried.”
Renoppia had, on whom she could rely,
A chosen squadron, married and unmarried ;
Women of Pompeian of virtuous birth,
And five score others of superior worth.

LXI.

Celinda and sweet Semidea were there,
Sisters of Manfred, and his dear delight ;
Each of them was equipped with bow and spear,
And quivered darts well sharpened for the fight ;
Renoppia who beheld how, far and near,
The Modenese had turned themselves to flight,
Pointed an arrow at the uncovered face
Of bold Perinto, hard upon the chase ;

LXII.

And had not Pallas turned the stroke aside,
Aimed by that beautiful hand with such precision,
Perhaps the bravest hero would have died ;
But though it failed in its important mission,
The horse, which at that moment reared with pride,
To show his blood and excellent condition,
Received the stroke upon his pectoral ridge,
And with his master tumbled on the bridge.

LXIII.

Sudden Perinto from the horse is freed,

But the proud dame, disdaining even a look,
Descended from the bridge, and ran with speed
To her confederates, who with terror shook ;
There at Tognon, who, glorying in the deed,
The spoils from Eugheram Panciera took,
Aimed, and the arrow, rapid as the wind,
Pierced where his armour at the shoulder joined.

LXIV.

Wounded the cavalier retires, but now

Another arrow whizzing in his ear,
Shot from the lovely Semidea's bow,
Shatters his leg,—the anguish most severe ;
Celinda grasps her lance, resolved to go
Where Periteo may her prowess fear,
And sees him, horse and all, in ireful mood,
From the high bank rolled headlong down the flood.

LXV.

At him full tilt her fair companions threw

A hundred darts,—an overwhelming shower ;
His mail defended him, but, run quite through,
His horse fell dead. In marriage-hall or bower,
Never shone richer dress—more dazzling new ;
Grand was his vest, and helmet, fashion's flower ;
All eyes were bent upon this man of note—
Better for him had been a beggar's coat.

LXVI.

As Telesilla once from Argos chased ⁽⁵⁾

The conquering Spartans, so Renoppia made
The conquering Bolognese, with breathless haste,
Abandon every post and barricade ;
As wakening from a dream, or torpid rest,
Ashamed of their base conduct, the brigade
Which fled, turned back again, with looks undaunted,
And on the bridge their glorious standard planted.

LXVII.

Then on the right their columns wide extending,
Rushed emulous the banks to occupy ;
When a loud tumult to the heavens ascending,
Echoed around—they presently knew why ;
It was Gherard, amidst the foe contending,
And coming to their succour rapidly ;
At his approach the new-lit embers blazed,
And Mars and Bacchus felt their spirits raised.

LXVIII.

Gherardo now despatches to the right
Bertoldo with two squadrons, and proceeds,
Himself, where he perceives the Potta fight,
Mounts on the bridge, and most prodigious deeds
Performs ; Perinto there on foot the knight
Opposes, but o'erpowered he soon recedes ;
So many rush the important bridge to gain
That his best efforts must have been in vain.

LXIX.

Gherardo barricades the bridge, and leaves
Giberto to defend it, hurrying now
Where the Panaro's turbid bosom heaves,
And his own people combat, full in view,
He finds his horse fatigued, at which he grieves,
But calls out for another, he had two ;
Yet has not patience down the bank to ride,
But headlong leaps into the splashing tide.

LXX.

Signor Faenza was amidst the fray,
With Capitan Brendon Boccabadati
Slaughtered were Gemignan Roncaglià,
Beltram Barocchio, and old Fredi Matti,
Gherardo with his *mazza* cut his way,
And routed Imolese and Cesenati,
Cattolicans, Ravennese, Faentines,
Making tremendous havoc in their lines.

LXXI.

On Capitan Fracassa's helm he gave
A furious and exterminating blow ;
Who falling senseless on the bubbling wave
Was made a prisoner by Brindon his foe.
Then turned and brandished his unsparing glave
Midst the Petronian troops, above, below,
And Count Panago, Boniforte too,
The worthy Signor di Castiglion, slew.

LXXII.

Now to the other bank the foes retreat,
 Seeing the dreadful loss they had sustained ;
And reaching, after their forlorn defeat,
 A firm position, they their speed restrained,
Breathing defiance ; but the sun had set,
 And Night, her gloomy empire having gained,
Was lighting all the lamps of heaven to close
On earth the day of mortals with repose.



NOTES TO THE SEVENTH CANTO.

1.

*They did not stop to talk of honours won,
As usual with the ancient men of war.*

Stanza v.

A hit at Homer's heroes, who generally give an account of their pedigree and exploits before engaging.

2.

*Pray, Count, do grant me the civility
To let me follow my good troops.*

Stanza xv.

Alluding to a similar circumstance in the Orlando Innamorato, where King Agricane, fighting with Orlando, requests leave to follow his people, and then return to the combat, which is granted—here, Voluce says, Orlando is dead. No one else would be so silly.

3.

O, how much bark, stripped from the chesnut tree.

Stanza xxxix.

Alluding to a war between the Garfagnines and Lucchese, in which the chesnut trees and vines on the mountains were in revenge cut down and destroyed. 1613.

4.

A young Alfonzo and Luigi then.

Stanza xli.

Two sons of Cesar, Duke of Modena.

5.

As Telesilla once from Argos chased.

Stanza lxvi.

Telesilla, a lyric poetess of Argos, who bravely defended her country against the Lacedæmonians, and obliged them to raise the siege. *Pausanias.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT.

*At last the left wing of the Modenese,
Contending hard, regain their own positions;
Ezzelin reviews his troops, and proudly sees
His Paduans, raised for warlike expeditions.
The camps conclude a truce; two Bolognese
Envoys are sent with profitless conditions;
Who with Renoppia, blooming, fair, and mellow,
List to the legends of blind Scarpinello.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO EIGHTH.

I.

THE sun's refulgence softly dies away,
Quenched by dark shadows, as the night prevails;
And glow-worms, mimicking the parted day,
Stars of the earth, display their fiery tails;
And now the trumpet's hoarsely thrilling bray,
Echoing a martial summons through the vales,
Calls from the stream the troops: the hostile ranks
Now from the flood retire to their own banks.

II.

And now against the bridge, on either side,
Tents and intrenchments for defence are reared;
Meanwhile three champions, long in battle tried,
Miceno, Manfred, and Roldan, appeared,
From following the foe, through valley wide,
And bowery wood; returning late, they heard
Upon the banks, the spirit-stirring sound
Of arms and horses ringing all around.

III.

And having ascertained by active spies

The various fortunes of the fight,—in doubt
They stand, debating if 'twere good and wise

To pass the enemy's lines, and issue out
To their own camp; or ford the stream, which lies

Between, and then their soldier's strength recruit;
At length they pass the ford and take their way
Towards the bridge, with horsemen in array.

IV.

And first, the Potta, privately advising

To move the stakes at a particular time;
Quick with the spoils of Ferrarese disguising

The foremost file, like men in pantomime,
And skilful artifices exercising,

To make the plot in full accordance chime;
Went on and, near enough their train to lay,
Roared in Ferrarese: "Guardai, Guardai."

V.

The dress and dialect, at dead midnight,

The tumult and confusion that arose,
And the loud crash, deceive the sentries quite,

And thus the champions work upon their foes:
Arrived in camp, how flash with lucid light

Their swords, the clang still more tumultuous grows:
And boldly they their arduous path pursue
Where the high bridge seems bursting on the view.

VI.

There was amazement in the bivouack,
Both heart and limb subdued, fatigued, opprest ;
When by the sounds of menace and attack,
A sudden terror shivered through the breast ;
As burning lightnings fall from heaven and track
With desolation, so with bloody crest
Comes Manfred, and Volucè, in the van ;
And with the hindmost squadron brave Roldan.

VII.

Like pears, the slaughtered people drop down dead
Under the fury of their flickering steel ;
The Count Romèò, seeing how dismayed
The Bolognese before them shrink and reel ;
Calls for his nephew Ricciardo's aid,
And, where his people most destruction feel,
Runs, but the impetuous heroes check his course,
Capturing both him and nephew, man and horse.

VIII.

As clouds of fiery vapour shed around
Ruin and desolation, casting forth
Lightning, and winds, and tempests that astound,
And bear uprooted trees and stones from earth ;
So the three champions kill, and maim, and wound,
And crush all opposition, such their worth ;
So, the Greek conjurors are pleased to say,
The eighth heaven hears the lesser heavens away.

IX.

Meantime the Potta, previously advised,
The brave Gherardo to the bridge had sent;
But their arrival was so quick, surprised
They found it barred and bound, without a vent;
Here Roldan's horse was killed, so highly prized,
And he himself had rued the dire event,
If the two others, fighting in the front,
Had not fallen back again to bear the brunt.

X.

On this side and on that they move where'er
The hindmost squadron suffers; there they urge
Their force and skill, and nobly persevere,
Till all their troops are on the river's verge;
Meanwhile the brave Gherard, approaching near,
Removes the bars, and through the gap emerge
His own allies, whilst kept behind and under,
The enemy stretch their nostrils wide with wonder.

XI.

The grand success of this terrific fight
Fame quickly noised abroad:—the rumour known,
Frederic lamented sore, as well he might,
The sad misfortunes of his captive son:
Implored his friends, and cursed himself outright
For being so slow and having nothing done;
But above all he Ezzelin implored;—⁽¹⁾
At that famed period Padua's tyrant lord.

XII.

As soon as haughty Ezzelino knew

The Emperor's son was captured by the foe,
He armed his people ;—to his sovereign true,

And never in his direful vengeance slow ;
He then had with him one, who by a new

Inheritance was prince, as he could show,
Of the Morèa, situate in Greece,
Whom he had lately married to his niece.

XIII.

In all the East a hero more renowned

Existed not, none wiser in debate ;
Eurimedonte was the name he owned,

A name tremendous to each Orient state,
Between the Red Sea and the Euxine found ;

The task was his that son to liberate ,
Intrusted thus the warrior soon was off,
For he had got a cold, besides,—a cough.

XIV.

Twelve squadrons were embodied ; each could boast

Two hundred horsemen and a thousand foot ;
And purposely the captains of this host

Were Ghibellines, and faithful men to boot.
Thou MUSE ! that millet-mess, and chesnut-roast,

Didst sell them, point their names and lineage out ;
Who made the lofty towers of Asinelli
Tremble from base to summit, like a jelly.

XV.

Already opened were the gates of light
By the fair mistress of Tithonus old,⁽²⁾
And in her shift, she, beautiful and bright,
Her feet was bathing in a sea of gold;
Her rising breast, as milk or ivory white;
Her lucid hair, amidst the waves unrolled;
In Thetis' mirror she her charms surveyed,
Tinting her blooming cheeks with rosier red;

XVI.

When all the squadrons issued forth to be
Reviewed, the foremost was the flag of Est;
Which once an eagle crowned bore gallantly,
An ostrich white was afterwards impressed
Upon the tyrant's scutcheon, strikingly,
To mark his deeds (a tiger had been best);
The flower of St. Eléna second follows,
A fruitful land of frogs, all fens, and hollows;

XVII.

And Castelbald, which tributary sands
Receives from the Adige; good old Savino
Cumani is the leader, and commands
The troops from Carnignan and Solesino;
And from Deserto and Valpona's lands,
Where coast along the shores the Vicentino;
His arms are gilt, and on his flag his seen
A sable lion on a field of green.

XVIII.

Schinella, and Ingolf, of lineage high,
Twins, loved by Ezzelin, their house's pride,
From the Crëola, and the mountains nigh,
Conduct their people on the farther side ;
San Daniel, Bäone, and peaks that lie
Along the starry heavens, all craggy, wide,
Vend, Rua, Montegrotto, Montortone,
Gazzuol, and Galzignano, and Caläone.

XIX.

With these Abano in one squadron goes,
And also Montagnon ; the humid air
And climate black and smoky, some suppose
Produce a brimstone-coloured people there ;
Megæra dwells there, and her dwelling glows
With fire infernal, horrid in its glare ;
If Pietro then had tried his magic charms,⁽³⁾
He'd raised up demons at the sound of arms.

XX.

A fillet of vermilion and white
The standards of the brother counts displayed :
Mantichier di Vigonza, on their right,
Leads the third squadron, armed with bow and blade ;
Vighezzol, Catelfranco, pour in sight,
And from the Brenta's further banks arrayed,
Where winds the Tergola in gulfs and shoals,
And the impetuous Muson foams and rolls.

XXI.

Camposampier, Bal, Sala, and Mirano,
Stra, Mira, Oriäg, Dolo, Fiess,
Arian, Caltana, Malar, Stigliano,
And those of Bogion, in number less ;
The standard of the *Cavalier Soprano*
Carries the ancient family impress ;
A bar of miniver, traversed on a field
Of gold, adorned with white and grey the shield.

XXII.

The fourth that passes Inghelfredo leads,⁽⁴⁾
A low-born, vulgar man ; appointed first
To a vile office, for unworthy deeds ;
Elected treasurer, he, in cunning versed,
To an illustrious martial rank succeeds ;
Craft serves his turn, the foulest and the worst ;
Proud in his mien, with arrogance possessed,
He has forgotten now his beggar's nest.

XXIII.

Baron di Terradura he is styled ;
Through his domain the deep Battaglia flows,
And his old halls, o'ergrown with foliage wild,
Ring to the roar of waters—he has rows
Of lilies o'er his armour thickly piled ;
A silver grey-hound on his helmet glows ;
And him the tyrant Ezzelin has made
The honoured leader of his own brigade.

XXIV.

The standard of Onara and Romano,
 Of Musolente; and of Cittadella,
 He governs; Fontanina, and Bassano,
 And arms the peasantry of Bolzanella;
 With these go the Campèsans, *mano mano*;
 Campesè, not renowned for its prunella,⁽⁵⁾
 But,—far as distant Ireland and Cataio,
 For the long-honoured tomb of old Merlin Coccaio.

XXV.

The Latin author of Virgilian strains,
 By which Cipàda equals Mantua's fame,⁽⁶⁾
 And mountains of Cuccagna, rivers, plains,
 Eclipse even Thessaly's romantic name,
 Now the Campèsans, once in Lethe's chains,
 From streams Castalian highest honour claim;
 And haply this rude chaunting may prolong
 Their fair renown, though uninspired the song.

XXVI.

The fifth is Brunor Buzzaccarni, he
 Conducts those of Conselve, Bovolenta,
 Are, Cona, l'Anguillara, Tribanè,
 Those of Sarmasa, and Castèl di Brenta;
 Of Pontelungo, and of Polverè,
 Where lies the land of Cocks, by which is meant a⁽⁷⁾
 Province for its superior breed renowned;
 Their standard has a white and greenish ground.

XXVII.

The others follow in a martial row,
From Piovè di Saccò, and Safonara,
Montmerlo, and Sanfanzo, Brazolo,
Along with them in one Camponogara,
San Bruson, and Cammin, accoutred go,
Led by the son of Signor Calcinara,
Called Franco Capolista; for his shield
He bears a red deer, on a golden field.

XXVIII.

Of Mandra and Riviera he unites
The warlike and hereditary race;
And those of Paluello, too, invites;
So lazy were they, with so little grace,
So slow in arming, that, inglorious wights!
The war was ended ere they showed their face;
And hence their neighbours joke them for the aid,
And succour given, and bravery displayed!

XXIX.

With the seventh squadron passes Ayocasso
Capodivacca, with him Montagnana,
And Zoonè leaves behind, and Monterosso,
And leads Revlon, Torreggia, and Urbana,
Maggiaino, and the province of Merlasso,
And further to the north Luvigliana,
Selvazzan, Saccòlungo, Cervarese,
Praia, and all the country round Salese.

XXX.

But of Tëolo shines the standard bright
Above the others, from its splendid hue ;
Tëolo, where first saw the blessed light
Old Titus Livius, if the tale be true.
The flag of Ayocasso was bedight
With three swords, silver ; and, in limb and thew,
He every one surpassed ; a gallant show,
Looking a lofty tower in suburb low.

XXXI.

After Monselce comes, with blade and sack,
Either for stealing or for fighting ready ;
Under the orders of Alviero Zacch,
And those of Casalè, and Roncale di ;
His flag is chequered (in Italian, *sciacch*.)
With blue and white, and Gorgo and Bertedi,
And ancient Corneggiana, Montereto,
Carrara, and Collalt, and Carpineto.

XXXII.

Captain the ninth is Ugon Santuliana,
Who of the neighbouring towns had special care ;
The Terranegra leads, and Brusegana,
Antenor founded his good city there ;⁽⁸⁾
Villafranca, Mortisè, and Candiana,
Saint Gregory, Saint Orfala, Cartèr,
Le Tombelle, Villatora, and Novente,
And other towns flourished there in plenty.

XXXIII.

And no small portion of his vassal train,
From his Pernumia, and Terralba too ;
And the fine hills of Arquà ; mountain, plain,
Seen on each side enrich the fairy view ;
Where lies the bard, in whose impassioned strain,
The laurel still retains its freshest hue ;
And where the stuffed cat, (there are few but know it)
Still guards from rats the threshold of the poet.⁽⁹⁾

XXXIV.

Apollo, spite of Time's decay, ordained
The body should continue sleek and fat ;
That her renown, so gloriously obtained,
Should in a thousand songs be sung, and that
The tombs of buried kings, who nobly reigned,
Should be eclipsed by an unburied cat.
Ugon has on his mail and upper vest
A golden pard in azure field exprest.

XXXV.

The squadron of Vicenza was the last,
Led by Naimicro Gualdi, outwardly
The friend of Ezzelin, with whom he past
As honest-hearted, free from perfidy ;
In camp he all in wariness surpast,
Inventor of all sorts of stratagey !
But feigning to be dull, his way to grope,
He with his turnip-standard served the Pope.

XXXVI.

He was at least a man of fifty-two,⁽¹⁰⁾

Learned, facetious, with a shrivelled skin ;
With others ever playful, for he knew ⁽¹¹⁾

Marguttè's jokes by heart ; could gibe and grin ;
And he had with him an obstreperous crew,

With squinting eyes, and horrible as sin ;
Who bearing ladders, hedge-bills, bows, and darts,
For vilest deeds seemed born with vilest hearts.

XXXVII.

He leads Valmaran, Arcugnan, Fimone,
Sacco, and Pilla, and Spianzan, where
Begotto sweetly, on the Bacchiglione,

The charms and tresses sings of Betia fair ;
And where the warbling flageolet of Menone,

With dear Tietta's name attunes the air ;
And Gualda, Montecchio, Olm, Cornetto,
And thirty hamlets more in that *distretto*.

XXXVIII.

When the last squadron passed, the cavalier

Appointed to command them, singly came
On a bay courser, spotted front and rear ;

His armour of the tint of living flame ;
A pompous plume flowed down o'er either ear ;

Most splendid in his look, a knight of fame ;
Upon him all around admiring stared ;
And Greeks and Saracens composed his guard.

XXXIX.

Whilst these are armed for vengeance in the cause
Of Frederic's captive son; as in defeat
Upon Panaro's banks both armies pause,
Each looking for the other to retreat;
The watch and sentries keeping picket-laws,
And ancient customs, track with silent feet
The swelling banks which overtop the stream,
And gaze and wait as frightened as they seem.

XL.

Mastro Pasquino, the great engineer,
Filled many butts with biscuit, some with wine,
And macaroni, body-pampering cheer,
And turned them into bastions; these, in fine,
Insured a firm defence, and, ever near,
The soldiers stooped, to guttle, I opine;
Until a truce their watchful labours ended,
And for ten days the battle was suspended.

XLI.

Behold the two ambassadors draw near!
One with a long robe, hooded to the chest;
The other with his sword and stylish gear,
All loves and graces sumptuously drest;
The first a college-sage, and rather sear,
Named Dottor Marescotti, from the west;
The second is a Rodi Cavaliero,
Descended from Barzellin, called Fra Piéro.

XLII.

They come to try their rhetoric again,
The Bucket to recover ; they had found
Ezzelin preparing for a fierce campaign ;
That tyrant by no gentle mercies bound.
Honoured they are, and due respect maintain,
In treating now they take another ground ;
And for the Bucket they propose to bring
The barons taken—all, except the king.

XLIII.

The Potta comprehending their design,
Replied : “ It will be better far to close
“ All wrangling, and King Enzius resign ;
“ And with the Bucket, I at once propose
“ To give up Faenza, every Gorzanine,
“ Cremona, and Ricciardo.” Here he rose
And showed himself most resolutely bent
On scorning all, but this arbitrement.

XLIV.

The sage ambassadors had now to call
For further powers, and from the camp they sent
A courier to Bologna's Council-hall,
With sealed despatches for the Reggiment.
Meanwhile the brave Gherard and Manfred tall,
The envoys take, with courteous intent,
To see the grand intrenchment, and the show
Of mighty squadrons marshalled, ere they go.

XLV.

Then to Renoppia's quarters they retire,
A queen, surrounded by her female train ;
The most distinguished for their martial fire
Of those who dared to brave the battle-plain ;
All armed, at their embroidery ; they aspire
To imitate Minerva, nor in vain ;
But now their needles throw aside, and bring
The harper Scarpinel, to play and sing.

XLVI.

He was a famous linguist, and he knew
In every tongue to speak extemporè ;
He rhimes composed, and sung so sweetly too,
That Pharaoh's heart had, by his minstrelsy,
Been all subdued ; in front his harp he drew,
The harp which rang with perfect harmony ;
And as his fingers o'er the cat-gut ran,
Made a few ugly grins, and thus began.

XLVII.

Endymion, couched on balmy herbs and flowers,
Was sleeping, weary of the tedious day,
And while the breeze from heaven's immortal bowers
Was tempering summer-heat, with amorous play
The infant Loves descended, amid showers
Of roses, and with laughing roguery they
Unbound his bow and horn ; him they mistook
For Cupid,—so bewitching was his look.

XLVIII.

His lovely locks were floating loose in air,
 O'er his cheeks falling in a cloud of gold ;
 The little Loves were from his face so fair
 Parting the lucid threads in many a fold ;
 And with the flowers that they had gathered there,
 Twisted, and into various garlands rolled,
 Adorned his forehead, and his gentle feet,
 And made him anklets, and a necklace sweet.

XLIX.

And oft compared his amorous smiling mouth
 With peony and red anemonè ;
 And the soft cheeks of the enchanting youth
 With rose and lily—lovelier still was he !
 The winds and waters, the mild whispering south,
 All, all are lulled in silent harmony ;
 Air, water, earth, a balmy stillness keeping,
 Seem murmuring tranquilly, “ Behold Love sleeping.”

L.

As in the heavens where Taurus feels the heat
 Shed by the luminous stars, above, around,
 The daughters of old Atlas sparkling meet,
 Their tresses glittering through the blue profound ;
 The eldest the most gentle, and discreet,
 Shines above all—for beauty most renowned ;
 So midst the Loves Endymion appears, [tears.
 Immersed in flowers and herbs, begemmed with dewy

LI.

When the bright goddess of the lunar sphere,
Warmed by the rays of the departed sun,
Removed the veil to show the world more clear,
The prospect looked all silent, calm, and lone,
And scattering o'er the violets peeping near
Refreshing dew from her celestial zone,
Glanced haply on that mead, and unattended,
To see what might befall, from heaven descended.

LII.

At her approach the Loves, all terrified,
Soon disappeared, and when the goddess bright
Saw the lone youth thus sleeping on his side,
She stopped—and gazed at him—a beauteous sight!
Restrained by virgin modesty and pride,
She timid stood, and blushed in her own light;
And had already turned her steps away,
But charmed drew back to where the shepherd lay.

LIII.

Through her moist eyes she felt an ardent fire
Pass to her heart, and all her soul on flame;
By gradual soft advances, fond desire
Placed her close to the boy—subdued her shame;
And with those flowrets, Flora's rich attire,
With which the Loves had played their innocent game,
She crowned herself—adorned her snowy breast,
But found them poison, fatal to her rest.

LIV.

The flowers attract her hand—the hand again
 Encouraged,—she his cheeks, and lips, and eyes,
 Kisses, and fondly clasps him with a strain
 So vivid, that he wakens with surprise ;
 The splendours of her face divine enchain
 His senses, and he trembles ;—he would rise,
 With reverence to salute that heavenly guest,
 But she enfolds him closer to her breast.

LV.

“ Sleepy and beautiful soul ! ” she ardent said :
 “ Why tremblest, gazest thou ? The Moon am I,
 “ By love, and fate, and fortune, hither led,
 “ To sleep with thee, on this sweet bank to lie ;
 “ Be not disturbed, still press this balmy bed
 “ In bland repose, and, under the dark sky
 “ The ardour I express to thee conceal,
 “ Or heaven’s dire anger thou wilt surely feel.”

LVI.

“ Eye of the world on which Apollo’s light
 “ Is thrown, I am a humble shepherd-boy ;
 “ But by your favour, should you deem it right,
 “ In other spheres my service to employ,
 “ Be certain of my love, my faith I plight,
 “ And take this veil, a former pledge of joy ;
 “ Given by my father Æthlius to my mother,
 “ Calyce—never breathed there such another.”

LVII.

So saying, he a gauzy veil displayed,
Adorned with pearls and lilies—it was long,
Covering the back and chest, and, overlaid
From right to left, in folds pictorial hung ;
This he enamoured gave, no more afraid,
Terror no longer to his fibres clung ;
And, as a flower when languid, frozen, pale,
So he into her arms impassioned fell.

LVIII.

With not more strict embrace the twisting vine
Clings round the branchy elm, nor ivy green
With more affection clasps the shady pine,
Tenacious ever, ever faithful seen,
Than the two lovers, mortal and divine,
Full of endearing kindness, soul and mien ;
Throbbled their wild hearts in unison and joy,
The lunar goddess, and the shepherd-boy.

LIX.

Thus amidst kisses and impassioned sighs,
Looks, glances, and delicious languishment,
The lovers feel love's soul-delighting ties,
In chaste communion, joyous and content ;
The raptured goddess raised her tearful eyes,
Accused the stars, and every element,
Because her fate had been to hunt in grove
And forest, beasts,—unknown to him and love.

LX.

- “ Unhappy me!” she said, “ how sad the day
“ When I became a huntress of the plain;
“ How many fruitless years have rolled away,
“ Years, never, never to return again.
“ O erring steps, that led me thus astray,
“ How have I cast them to the winds in vain;
“ Ah! better had it been, how sweeter far,
“ To live in love, than seek the panther’s lair.

LXI.

- “ My error now I know—but where’s the cure!
“ Alas! not in my power—for heaven denies
“ The boon, and what is willed I must endure,
“ But for the future I shall be more wise;
“ Therefore, Air, Earth, and Ocean! I conjure
“ Ye to attend to what I now advise;
“ The law I now pronounce, fixed in my mind,
“ Shall last while the sun lasts, to influence womankind.

LXII.

- “ I do enact: The Orb, by destiny mine,
“ Shall never hide a lovely face again,
“ (Except some few whom I esteem divine,
“ Greater than me and all the starry train)
“ Who shall neglecting Love’s inspiring shrine,
“ Through life a rebel to his power remain;
“ Yes, all who keep untouched by that soft flame,
“ Unless on mere pretence, and but in name.”

LXIII.

The old blind harper wishing now to show

How sad the goddess to her sphere departed,

Renoppia looked at him with scowling brow,

And with a threatening voice his object thwarted.

“Go! blind in eyes and mind, I tell thee go!

“Thou ugly wretch!” she said, “and evil-hearted!

“Go! sing to harlots, with such chuckling glee,

“These shameful legends are not fit for me.

LXIV.

“If thou wouldst have me listen to thy song,

“And merit access to my house again,

“Sing of Zenobia, glorious, fair, and young,

“Or of Lucretia,—touch that noble strain.”

The harper paused, half angry—but ere long

Struck up a warlike tone, applause to again;

And sung the love of Sextus, and his crime,

Commencing boldly in the octave rhyme.

LXV.

Tarquin the Proud, the Roman emperor,

Had near the royal halls of Turnus brought

His camp, where horse and foot, full many a corps,

Oxen and slaves, surrounded trench and moat;

All his brave sons were there, and, furthermore,

In feasts and banquettings their pleasure sought;

So hard they drank that on St. Martin's day,

Seven of them swilled a cask of wine, they say.

LXVI.

Finished the wine, there rose an altercation
Among them, who the truest wife possessed ;
And each being eloquent in vindication
Of his own partner, thinking her the best ;
To put an end to this strange disputation
They all agreed, upon a certain test,
At once to start post haste, devour the way,
And ascertain the fact without delay.

LXVII.

Stirrups nor saddles then were used, nor known,
And those wild lords, the grape juice in their brain,
Guided by the dim stars roved boldly on,
Nor feared the forest might their course restrain ;
Some lost their sacks, some slippers, some being thrown
Midst thorns and brambles rent their cloaks in twain ;
In various ways the fumes of wine went off,
And some arrived with hiccups, some a cough.

LXVIII.

With them Tarquinius Collatinus went,
Whose wife, Lucretia, at Collatia stayed ;
Not their true brother, but the same descent,—
A cousin, who their cognomen displayed ;
They all reached Rome, on their adventure bent,
And found their wives amidst a vast parade
Of feasting, dancing ; giggling one and all,
And frisky as the devil at a ball.

LXIX.

In a Moresca then they beat the ground,
And footed it with an accomplished air;
And, having roasted ducks and capons found,
Took off two baskets to Collatia, where
They soon arrived;—the gates and windows round
The house were well secured with bolt and bar;
And several times they knocked, in that dark night,
Before they heard a voice, or saw a light.

LXX.

An hour elapsed, and then a slave was seen
Upon the balcony, with listening ear,
Peeping out like a lizard, sharp and lean,
She cried: "Who knocks? My master is not here!"
"Yes! yes! he is!" then answered Collatine,
"Come down, and you shall see him, never fear."
Their master's voice the servants quickly knew,
And to unbolt the doors obsequious flew.

LXXI.

Lucretia met him in the hall o'erjoyed,
The distaff in her hand, no servant nigh;
When hastening to embrace him, she descried
So many signors in his company,
Her rock of flax she vainly strove to hide,
And blushing showed those tints that beautify
The full-blown rose, so exquisite and winning,
And called her maidens, then employed in spinning.

LXXII.

At once the royal brothers now decreed
To her the palm, as worthiest and the best ;
All night they slept there, and next morn with speed
Returned, their wild adventure to digest ;
But beauty, such as nothing could exceed,
And words that charm, inflamed the wicked breast
Of the proud Sextus, Tarquin's younger son ;
For chaste Lucretia his base heart had won.

LXXIII.

The fifth day after he turned back again,
And ventured to Collatia alone ;
Arriving there as eve assumed her reign,
He said, " I'll sleep here !" so familiar grown !
The spotless wife not dreaming of the train
Of plotted miseries, made the house his own ;
At night the traitor, not disposed to rest,
Stole like a monster to her room undrest.

LXXIV.

Down fell the door, half broken ; he rushed in,
Grasping a dagger ;—on an osier bed,
A poor old woman raised a horrid din,
As if bewitched ; on this account he made
Her jump out of the window, lose or win,
And to Lucretia in a flurry said,
(For she had raised as clamorous a note)
" Do pray, be quiet, or I'll cut your throat !"

LXXV.

At this the sweet Renoppia, bending down
With elegance and grace, unloosed her shoe ;
But the blind harper seeing by her frown
The tempest coming, cunningly withdrew ;
The lords laughed heartily when he had gone,
And rising up, with ceremony due
She thanked them for their kindness o'er and o'er,
And lady-like then saw them to the door.

NOTES TO THE EIGHTH CANTO.

1.

But above all he Ezzelin implored.

Stanza xi.

Ezzelin da Romano was then Signor di Padova, and dependent on the Emperor Frederic.

2.

*Already opened were the gates of light
By the fair mistress of Tithonus old.*

Stanza xv.

Tassoni is rather coarse in calling Aurora—*la Puttanella del canuto amante*," yet Dante is not much better. He says in his Purgatory,

La concubina di Titone antico
Gia s'imbiancava al balzo d'Oriente
Fuor de le braccia de su dolce amito.

3.

If Pietro then had tried his magic charms.

Stanza xix.

Speaking of Pietro d'Abano, a reputed magician. The original is *i morti regni*, the dead, but one of the commentators says Pietro would have raised a company of demons, or an empire of the dead, in favour of the Modenese.

4.

The fourth that passes Inghelfredo leads.

Stanza xxii.

Under the name of Inghelfredo, one of the favourites of Ezzelin is characterized.

5.

Compesè.

Stanza xxiv.

A place in Padua, where was buried the Padre D. Trofilo Folongo Monaco Casenèse, author of the celebrated *Merlino Cocciaio*, and other noble poems, among which the *Umanità de Cristo* may be mentioned.

6.

By which Cipada equals Mantua's strains.

Stanza xxv.

Cipada and Mantua, the latter illustrated by the verses of Virgil, and Cipada those of the poet *Merlino*.

7.

Where lies the land of Cocks.

Stanza xxvi.

Regno de' galli, the cocks of *Polverè* or *Polverara* were famous for their breed all over Italy.

8.

Antenor founded his good city there.

Stanza xxxii.

Antenor, one of the principal Trojans, who after the destruction of Troy, sailed towards Italy.

9.

*And where the stuffed cat
Still guards from rats the threshold of the poet.*

Stanza xxxiii.

The skin of Petrarch's cat is preserved even to this day, says one of Tassoni's commentators. Cats have often been eulogized by authors; Francesco Coppetta celebrated his in verse, so did Torquato Tasso, Giovambattista Tagiote, and many others.

10.

He was at least a man of fifty-two.

Stanza xxxvi.

The description of the Archpriest Gualdi, the author's friend.

11.

*For he knew
Margutte's jokes by heart.*

Stanza xxxvi.

Margutte's jokes, *che sapea tutte i molti dī Margutte*. Margutte, a waggish, gluttonous dwarf, in the Morgante of Pulci 18th canto, stanzas 115 to 148, of the following.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO NINTH.

ARGUMENT.

*Melindo to the bridge comes, amorous knight,
And calls to tourney all the cavaliers ;
Upon the Enchanted Island, brave, polite,
In splendid pomp the stately youth appears ;
The first who tries is vanquished in the fight,
Hence all the others feel foreboding fears ;
At last by an aspiring knight, unknown,
Broke is the enchantment, and the youth o'erthrown.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO NINTH.

I.

ALREADY the ambassadors had gone,
Who came to search for peace, and sought in vain;
The joyous conquerors, rather haughty grown,
Resolved the king should not get back again;
The nuncio,* too, supposed (the whim his own)
He would be sent to Rome and there remain
Within the clutches of a greater foe,
That it might prove to Frederic a severer blow.

II.

During the truce there down the river came,
Floating majestically o'er the tide,
A rapid barge of highly-sculptured frame,
Carrying two heralds, sitting in their pride;
When at the bridge arrived, their views the same,
They disembarked each on a different side;
And soon as they approached the tents, a knight
Of either camp they challenged to the fight.

* See canto v. and stanza xxv.

III.

This was the challenge: "To deserve the love
"Of a bright damsel, matchless in her charms;
"Matchless in valour, all the world above,
"A cavalier now challenges to arms,
"At tourney, every knight his claim to prove;
"Till one the other gallantly disarms;
"He only from the conquered asks the shield,
"And he will give his own, if forced to yield."

IV.

The challenge was accepted, here and there
The jousts kept themselves prepared for fight,
Thinking as eve was darkening the air,
The combat would begin with morning's light;
But scarcely had the gloom spread every where,
Shutting the visible world in murky night,
And robbing nature of her various dyes,
When a loud trumpet echoed through the skies.

V.

Three hundred squadrons starting at the sound,
Arrayed themselves in arms, confused, amazed;
When on the river a huge ship they found
Breasting the swelling waters, proudly raised,
And scattering squibs and rockets all around,
With more than hell's terrific brightness blazed;
It seemed a ship, but coming rear the bridge,
It looked an isle, the poop a mountain ridge.

VI.

Horrid and craggy was that mountain high,
Crowned by a verdant lawn, a lovely mead ;
Which was in length twice sixty paces, by
Thirty or more in breadth ; with gentle speed
The prow closed on the bridge, and to the sky
A column rose as straight as any reed ;
And scattered flames with such surprising art,
The prospect was illumed in every part.

VII.

Enchanted from the column is suspended
A golden horn, and on the marble fair
A brief inscription shows what is intended ;
“ BLOW IT, ALL YE WHO THIS ACHIEVEMENT DARE ! ”
Above the horn, again, there was appended
A silver shield in which the sculptor's care
Was much more precious than the precious ore,
With this inscription, “ TO THE CONQUEROR ! ”

VIII.

Upon it, with a master's hand, was wrought
Martano's battle with Seleucia's chief ;
At which emprise, a fight so strangely fought,
Damascus was amazed ; in fine relief
Griffoné, too, was given, immersed in thought,
And almost mad with dreadful shame and grief ;
The laughing Court, and Norandin, the sight
Enjoy, but good Martano takes to flight.

IX.

The lawn was spread with herbs of freshest green,
And myrtles o'er the stream their shadows threw ;
Landing, the warriors, ravished with the scene,
Traversed the flowery mead, all gemmed with dew ;
But when they found the islet had not been
Inhabited they to the column drew,
And soon among them the dispute ran high
Who should be first the enterprize to try.

X.

They then cast lots, on Galcotto fell
The chance ; that ardent youth soon took the horn
And sounded it, 'twas such a withering knell,
That every one with stupor looked forlorn ;
The islet trembled, influenced by the spell,
River and bank shook, as if upwards borne ;
The fires went out, and all the starry host,
And the calm sky its lovely brightness lost.

XI.

And whilst the earthquake lasted a dense cloud
Hid every thing from view ; then sudden came
A flash of lightning, followed quick by loud
And horrible thunder, which convulsed the frame,
And made the blood rush to the heart ; all bowed
Appalled, and senseless ;—darting vivid flame
A thunderbolt fell on the mountain's breast,
And crackling fires its awful range embraced.

XII.

The groaning mountain burned, and in a trice
Converted every object into flame ;
And midst the blaze with many a rare device
A gay pavilion rose, of wondrous frame ;
Fitting an eastern emperor's curious choice,
And fibres incombustible (the name
Asbestos) were seen glittering in the fire : [wire.
Strange flax for weaving cloth, the threads like red-hot

XIII.

The mountain was reduced to dust, and clear
And cloudless grew the heavens, serenely blue ;
Meanwhile a hundred trumpets struck the ear
With warlike sounds, harmonious, full, and true ;
Back came the light which had gone out, and near
The column flared, when straight wide open flew
The gay pavilion ; through the portals rolled
A hundred pages, dressed in white and gold.

XIV.

They all seemed Ethiopians, black as jet,
A poet would compare them, not unmeetly
To flies in milk, or sloes in lilies set ;
The sable troop, thus decorated neatly,
Came out with lighted torches ; first they met,
And then divided in two lines completely
Leaving a space between, a passage free
For those engaged in glorious chivalry.

XV.

A squire meantime had on the other side
Carried a quantity of shining spears.
Now Galeotto with a warrior's pride
In green apparel, helm, and arms, appears ;
A Thracian horse, all beautifully pied,
Beneath him, fetlocks white, erect his ears,
Curvetting, springing with an eager bound,
And spurning, at the spur, the smoking ground.

XVI.

Prepared was every thing excepting one,
The Cavaliero of the enterprize :
But when the trumpet sounded, he anon
Quitted the bright pavilion : wondering eyes
Beheld his wonderous vest, which sparkling shone
With gems ; his armour, a prodigious prize.
Was of pure silver, and his helmet too,
But blacker was his horse than blackest crow.

XVII.

Raised was his visor, and the youth in age
Seemed sixteen summers, beautiful and fair ;
Gentle in aspect, courteous as a page,
His habit added to his winning air ;
He bowed as if all hearts he would engage,
And the fierce steed he managed with such care,
He made him still on the same footsteps prance ;
And then with graceful ease he grasped his lance.

XVIII.

He lowered his visor, and with patience waited
The sonorous summons from the trumpet's clang ;
And soon as heard with confidence elated,
Like flame, or wind, from either side they sprang ;
Full in the midst they met, thus stimulated,
Their javelins, breaking into splinters, rang ;
Their helmets flashed with sparks, above, around,
Till Galeotto neatly pressed the ground.

XIX.

To contemplate so beautiful a sight,
Both camps upon the river's banks remained ;
And both Podestas, in the lucid light,
Admired the combat gallantly maintained ;
Beneath umbrellas they beheld the plight
Of Galecott, and saw his foe extend
A generous hand to stop his frightened horse,
Ready to gallop off along the course.

XX.

Confounded, Galeotto soon resigned
To the proud conqueror his burnished shield,
Whose rim with emblems curiously entwined,
Quickly displayed his name to all the field ;
Meanwhile a cavalier of haughty mind,
Pompous in gold and azure stood revealed,
And on a dappled steed with points all black,
Grasping his lance, began a fierce attack.

XXI.

Upon the buckler's edge his huge lance broke,
And the air buzzed and echoed with the snap ;
But shortly he received a mighty stroke,
Which threw him down on earth's enamelled lap ;
Scarce had he fallen ere his sword he took,
And sought for vengeance for his sad mishap,
But shrunk the other back, when, lo ! a blast
Blew out the lights and all in darkness cast.

XXII.

The islet trembled, vomiting on high
Red waving flames and thunders ; towering then
A horrid giant rose with scowling eye,
Enough to frighten heaven and earth ; and when
He came, against the warrior spitefully
He rushed, infuriate from his sulphurous den ;
Him like a pullet in his grasp he wrung,
And horse and all amidst the river flung.

XXIII.

Hence 'twas with struggle hard he saved his life,
Swimming ; his shield the name *Irnèo* bore ;
Again the isle was rent, in wonders rife,
And the fierce giant form was seen no more ;
Again the champion showed himself for strife,
The light had made as brilliant as before
Th' extinguished torches ; and the rushing sound
Of wind had ceased, nor longer rocked the ground.

XXIV.

The third bold combatant was Valentino,
 Who rode a sorrel horse of gentle pace,
 And then the fourth, the valorous Jacopino,
 Upon a jennet of the Moorish race,
 Shod, not with iron, but *argento fino* ;
 Saddle and bridle trimmed with golden lace,
 And pearls; yet, vanquished, both the island quitted,
 Without their shields, in haste, and eke unpitied.

XXV.

The fifth was Levizzano's lord, well known
 As proud Celinda's lover, though in vain ;
 For her, struck in the breast and overthrown,
 He nearly perished on that fatal plain ;
 The splinters of the lance which hurled him down,
 Passed through the visor, menacing his brain ;
 His eyebrow was transfixed as with a knife,
 To the great peril of his sight and life.

XXVI.

The Potta turned to *Zaccaria, who
 Was sitting near him, and said softly : “ Master !
 “ All this is downright sorcery, I vow ;
 “ ‘ To all, this cavalier will bring disaster ;’
 The old man answered : “ On my life, ’tis true !
 “ It seems the same to me, and all imposture ;
 “ Nor do I see what profit they can gain
 “ By battling thus with demons and their train

* Zaccharia Tosabecchi—See canto iii.

XXVII.

“ Of vile enchanters ; hence I would direct
“ That none of mine should hazard the adventure.”
The Potta took the hint with due respect,
And ordered that no more the isle should enter ;
And silent sat in attitude erect,
Waiting to witness what the enemy meant, or
Proposed to do ; he saw two, gaily drest
In brown and gold both mounted like the rest.

XXVIII.

One forward rushed, but with a touch he soon
Was tumbled from his saddle on the ground ;
And yet he seemed a knightly brave dragoon,
Valorous of heart and hand, in honour sound ;
The other too was thrown, whilst falling down
His horse had to a distance made a bound ;
Then the first rose, with an aspect ever
Fearless and proud addressed Him of the River.

XXIX.

“ Warrior ! if thou art not through magic strong,
“ And powerful with thy lance, pri’thee alight,
“ And with thy sword, however broad and long,
“ In courtesy remove from me this slight ;
“ But if thou art afraid, or think’st it wrong,
“ The combat to disturb, go on, and fight ;
“ Provided I may try my falchion’s power,
“ Upon thee once or twice ; I ask no more.”

XXX.

The champion of the islet thus replied :

- “ To alight, perhaps, I should have been compelled
“ If I had come in vengeance, hate, or pride,
“ Armed to the combat on this chosen field ;
“ I came to joust, with love alone my guide ;
“ And my design to all has been revealed ;
“ I am not, therefore, bound at your desire,
“ To change the combat which my vows require.

XXXI.

- “ But that you may not deem my spirit tame,
“ And cowardly, refusing such request ;
“ Let me complete my enterprize, your claim
“ Shall then be answered as may suit you best ;
“ If for the shield you ask, and that's your aim,
“ I'll give it back, but harbour in your breast
“ No thought of gaining it by other measure,
“ Nor that I'll change the combat at your pleasure.”

XXXII.

- “ But thou shalt change it in thine own despite.”

The other quick replied : “ thou foul magician !”
And with the lance-shaft on his helmet bright
Gave him a blow, then drew with expedition
His sword, and instantly, as with affright,
The island trembled in a strange condition ;
The lights went out, heaven wrung with horrid crashes,
Earth opened, and out issued smoke and flashes.

XXXIII.

Sparkled the smoke—and presently then came
Two bulls of form prodigious into view ;
Whose eyes of fire, and breath of crimson flame,
Appeared to scorch the flowers, and change their hue ;
The warriors joined—and desperate in their aim
Without a sign of fear, their falchions drew ;
The bulls approached—both armies, with surprise,
Trembled to see their dreadful flashing eyes.

XXXIV.

The champion of the islet stept aside,
Safely to watch the formidable fight ;
The furious beasts each other's wrath defied, [might ;
And thundering stamped the ground with all their
And as they came the two brave warriors tried
Their strength to part them, each a valiant knight ;
Both cut and slashed them, but their swords were dull,
And seemed to fall on feathers soft, or wool.

XXXV.

The bulls return, and still the warriors bear
Upon them, striking at their curly brows,
Which send forth sparks of fire that shine afar,
But their hot fury is not cooled by blows ;
High with their horns the knights are tossed in air,
And plunged into the stream ; their shields disclose
Two names in characters of burnished gold,
Perinto proud, and P'éritéo bold.

XXXVI.

The bulls plunged headlong with the cavaliers
Amidst the stream—and instant disappeared ;
The former splendour now the landscape cheers,
The heavens resume their aspect mild and clear ;
The verdant isle no more convulsed appears,
But breathes of mirth and joy. Untouched by fear,
The champion who retired returns again ;
He comes, preparing for a new campaign.

XXXVII.

But long he waits to brave another fight—
For all were in confusion, and afraid ;
Till from the bridge descended a new knight
Upon a tawney courser ;—bridle-braid,
And harness, shone with gold and silver bright ;
He was in rich embroidery arrayed,
And came to break a lance, he asked for one,
And in a moment what he wished was done.

XXXVIII.

The trumpet sounded, and as lightnings fly
Through fields of air, to which earth, heaven, and sea,
Give way, and with them carry, blustering high,
Tempest and hail—with such velocity
The knights strike with their spears—and to the sky
Splinters and sparks from helms successively
Fly upwards ; so terrific to behold
That every heart felt paralyzed and cold.

XXXIX.

The steeds encountered front to front, and that
 Belonging to the champion of the isle,
O'erthrew the other with his master flat,
 And passed straight on, right rapidly the while;
The champion of the bridge, the time being past
 Sprung up again with overwhelming bile;
Seeking revenge—another lance he wanted,
And all he asked was most politely granted.

XL.

Another horse too came, a glossy roan,
 And up he vaulted on him with a spring;
With his left hand he turned, then spurred him on,
 And made him prance all frisky to the ring;
And when he reached his post he thought to atone
 For past disgrace, and do away the sting;
So forward pushed—but scarcely by the hand
Touched, ere he tumbled backward on the sand.

XLI.

Rising he said: “Here take my forfeit shield,
 “ I see thou art a sorcerer, a magician;
“ Neither with thee, nor demon, ill concealed,
 “ Will I my valour trust in competition;
“ Perhaps thou mayst upon this very field
 “ Pay dearly for it—lowered in thy condition,
“ For foulest arts—here with the devil stay,
“ The devil, who is thy patron saint to day.”

XLII.

This saying, he departed ; Tognon blazed
Upon the captured shield. Then came in view
Two cavaliers of generous look, who raised
Their spears against the island chief, but drew
Disgrace upon themselves ; one, in amaze,
Fell ; then the other, and their lances flew
Broken asunder—topsy-turvy they,
Tumbling upon the ground, inglorious lay.

XLIII.

Their shields remained, and on their rims were seen,
“ Paulo ” and “ Sagramora ” richly chased ;
Upon his mulberry courser, proud of mien,
A cavalier, whose golden upper vest
Shone bright with pearls, as he a prince had been,
Next moved to joust ; high plumes his helmet graced ;
His pages, an obsequious brotherhood,
In glittering liveries round the hero stood.

XLIV.

This was a champion not before described,
The hopeful offspring of a Roman cheat ;
A pedlar once, he next his conscience bribed,
And grew a rogue in grain, in camp and street ;
From being poor and sorely circumscribed,
He then turned signor, gentleman complete ;
And to improve his hopeful son's career,
On this adventure sent him boasting here.

XLV.

He came—a bladder well blown up with wind ;
Erect, as if a poker he had bolted ;
Known by his arms, and dress of rarest kind,
And gayest liveries, clothing many a dolthead ;
With what compare his aspect and his mind !
O, what could equal being so exalted !
The attempt would be with wildest folly blended,
And foppishness itself be quite offended.

XLVI.

Proudly and pompously he rode along,
And kept his horse from prancing, till he gained
The starting place, (himself a host so strong)
Ready the combat to commence, well trained ,
Called by the trumpet's voice, with javelins long,
Both came, earth trembling shook as they sustained
The onset, and the shores rung with the fray ;
But neither of the warriors would give way.

XLVII.

This was the first who bravely kept his seat,
Unmastered by the champion of the isle ;
And 'twas a marvel to behold the feat ;
All wondered, scarce believing it the while ;
The island cavalier then deemed it meet
To pause, and midst that honourable broil,
Spoke to his people. Both were now supplied
With stronger spears the contest to decide.

XLVIII.

But fragile, like the others, they were broken,
Their splinters driven the twinkling stars to greet;
Both cavaliers drooped down, a certain token
That each had nearly forfeited his seat ;
In fact the Roman, softly be it spoken,
Had lost his stirrup, and was almost beat ;
But hearing how his name was noised around,
His courage gave another vigorous bound.

XLIX.

As swells the Tyrrhene sea when Eurus blows,
And rolls its waters foaming up and down ;
So swells his wind-pulled heart, and ardent glows
At popular applause ;—with angry frown,
And yet o'erjoyed, erect and proud he goes,
Swaggering to see all eyes his prowess own ;
And having thus shown off in foppish vein,
Asks for another lance, to fight again.

L.

Perint and Peritéo burned with rage
To see him keep his saddle, unsubdued ;
The trumpets soon the third time to engage,
Called forth the mighty heroes ; both renewed
The hardy contest, scorning umpirage,
And rushing on with desperate fortitude,
At last, struck on the helm, the Romanesco,
Fell on the grass to cool himself, *al Fresco*.

LI.

Indignant he rose up, and with his sword
Ripped up the belly of his guiltless steed ;
As if the helpless animal had floored
His master purposely ; and, in his need,
Then to the island-chief addressed a word,
Or two : “ Thou must have patience—yes, indeed,
“ A shield of other stamp, must glad thy eyes,
“ Since I wont part with this, ’tis such a prize.”

LII.

The island-champion smiled and firmly said :
“ This I will have, by laws of fighting mine !
“ My own is better, costlier, too, inlaid,
“ Yet must not I the proffered terms decline.”
The Romanesco then : “ Am I afraid !
“ I swear by heaven I will not this resign.”
And drew his sword, when, as before, the ground
Shook, but the brilliant lights still gleamed around ;

LIII.

And out there issued a young ass—which wore
For ears two boots, intestines for a tail ;
And with the ears death-blows it gave ; a store
Of hog-wash filled the gut it brandished well ;
Dreadful its voice, its kick would kill a score ;
Its hide was diamond-hard, sans parallel ;
And when it found the warrior near enough,
Darted upon him the most savoury stuff.

LIV.

It looked like croquets boiled in ink, and spread
Infectious odours for a mile around ;
Titta di Cola faced the quadruped,
(Such was the name the Romanesco owned)
And o'er his vest abundantly was shed
Embroidery, not of pearls—far different found ;
He struck the monster with his sword, but where
The blow fell, scarcely ruffled was a hair.

LV.

The nimble ass his pair of heels presents,
Then shakes his tail-intestine with disdain ;
And at the same time opens its contents,
And braying makes the forest ring again ;
Flaps with his ears, and thus his anger vents
Upon the warrior's shoulders, sides, and brain ;
Turns round his poop, and thunders, lightens too,
Painting his visage of a dirty hue.

LVI.

The gallant Roman feeling thus the storm,
Threw down his favourite shield and took to flight ;
The island chief laughed at the foe's alarm,
And turned to the pavilion, for the night
Was hastening to the west, and, fearing harm,
No other champion ventured forth to fight ;
Therefore he shut himself within his tent,
As the shrill cocks began their matin merriment.

LVII.

All day the combatant continued there,

And was invisible to every one ;

But when the owls and owlets winged the air,

And roosting, on the houses, hailed the moon ;

Quick at the trumpet's voice, in armour rare,

He showed himself ; his vest, and helmet brown ;

Brown was his garniture ; of noble breed,

And whiter far than silver was his steed.

LVIII.

The pages who as candlesticks had stood,

And negroes seemed, now seemed like angels bright,

Descended from above ; the serving brood

Had changed in livery as in face to sight ;

And all their robes looked black as ebon-wood,

With scolloped borders, fancifully dight ;

And hence the people ran, Perugians keen

And Florentines, to view the coming scene.

LIX.

The youthful Averardo who had never

Before that time exposed himself in war ;

Was the first gallant knight upon the river,

And first, unhorsed, to kick his heels in air ;

He was not loth his buckler to deliver,

But raised his visor, stopped, and curious there

Questioned the pages, and the warrior's name,

His knightly story and his deeds of fame.

LX.

Meantime, by many a light encompassed round,
A damsel from the island came, arrayed
In robes of white, which swept the flowery ground,
Courteous and lovely was the blooming maid;
She, where Renoppia's tent the lawn imbrowned
Went with two squires, two pages horsed, and laid
The conquered shields before her—then began
Her message from her lord—and thus it ran:

LXI.

She said, the fame her bravery won that day
On which the hostile troops were by her power
Baffled, and valiantly kept at bay,
When victory seemed to be their certain dower,
Had gained his heart, and thence in armour gay,
He chose this combat, for her love;—the flower
Of woman-kind—and begged she would not frown,
Because his heart was fired by her renown.

LXII.

Renoppia blushed with shame, and angry said:
“ Sweet Ruffianella, cunning child! on me
“ Thy warrior throws away his conjuring trade;
“ For I was never fond of sorcery;
“ But thou art fair, in beauteous looks arrayed,
“ And stay'st with him i'the dark, all privately,
“ Why dost thou then thy hopes of pleasure smother,
“ And suffer him to combat for another.”

LXIII.

“ I’m but a servant,” answered the Donzella,
“ For me too much would be the rank and honour ;
“ My lord possesses *terre, e castella*,
“ And would not of such grandeur be the donor.”
Renoppia, beautiful and bright as Stella,
Replied, and cast a knowing look upon her ;
“ If it be so, I owe him recognition
“ For homage done me by this exhibition.

LXIV.

“ And though, perhaps, I should have liked it more
“ If succouring us, he had come forth in arms,
“ Like a true Mars, for one he would adore,
“ Without a countless host of magic charms ;
“ However, I accept, and thank him for
“ The pledged affection which his bosom warms ;
“ Tell him so !”—then she, never at a loss,
Drew from her breast at once a crystal cross,

LXV.

In which a tooth, San Gemignano’s, shone,
By Pope Onorio sanctified ;—and sought
Within her hand to place the lucid stone,
A present for her lord ; but, quick as thought,
Touched by the cross, the Demosel was gone,
Vanishing like a dream that ends in nought ;
Pages and squires too vanished from the green
And nothing save the bucklers marked the scene.

LXVI.

Renoppia read the names, returning those
She found belonging to her warrior friends ;
The others, she, as trophies of her foes,
Retained.—Meantime the champion forward bends,
Continuing his emprise ; with conquering blows
Always successful, compassing his ends ;
When mounted on a mare, in yellow vest,
Fierce on the bridge an unknown warrior prest.

LXVII.

Longest by two good palms his javelin beamed,
A panther frowned upon his helmet-crest ;
But doubtingly he came, by which it seemed
He came against his will, and sore distrest ;
The trumpets sounded, and that sound which teemed
With joy to others—his poor soul opprest ;
He galloped round, and showed in every part,
His charger carried him, and not his heart.

LXVIII.

Still he rides on, and down he lowers his lance,
And as he fast approaches shuts his eyes,
And grinds his teeth, and seemeth to advance,
As driven by shame alone, where honour lies ;
And in the shock, such was the wonderful chance,
O'erturns the foe—all stare with vast surprise
Then universal is the shout and strong,—
“ Huzza ! Long live the panther-champion, long !”

LXIX.

Wondering he turned to hear the loud Huzza!
And saw his rival stretched upon the ground;
Amazed, beside himself with glee, and gay,
He stopped to look in admiration round;
But quick the warrior, who had lost the day,
Sprung up and burning with disdain profound,
Fierce with his foot the solid earth he struck,
And all the plains around convulsive shook.

LXX.

The lights went out, and the pavilion, too,
Midst thunder deep and lightnings, disappeared;
The isle became a barge, to magic true,
With dung and straw and faggots filled and smeared,
Not one remained there of the numerous crew
Which filled its space (for every nook was cleared)
Except the victor, and a dwarf who held
A lantern in his hand, and eke a shield.

LXXI.

The shield presenting to the cavalier,
He said: "This is the conqueror's reward;
" Just from the column taken down, and here
" Left for the victor by my vanquished lord,
" Who now requests with courtesy sincere,
" That as you've shown such valour, you'll record,
" As best may suit your pleasure in the case,
" Your name, your country, and your natal place."

LXXII.

The victor leapt with joy, and thus replied :—

- “ Say to thy lord, that from a lineage old
“ Of Spain I am descended ; regions wide
“ Beyond the East have their achievements told ;
“ That Don Chisott, of errants prince and guide, ⁽¹⁾
“ So great in arms, magnanimous and bold,
“ Out of a foreign lady, in his bounty,
“ Begot my sire, the gay Don Flegetonte.

LXXIII.

- “ In Italy he held dominion, and
“ Through every realm extended his renown ;
“ And to complete the glory of his brand,
“ Wanted but Turpin’s suffrage—who made known
“ Orlando’s feats ; no knight of Holy Land
“ Equalled him, second to his sword alone ;
“ And that no secret may remain concealed,
“ Say, that the Count Culagna won the shield !

LXXIV.

- “ But since my story is before you laid,
“ And all your wishes have been satisfied,
“ ’Tis surely right that I should be obeyed,
“ And told your master’s name, and how allied.”
The dwarf rejoined : “ Attention shall be paid
“ To your desires—but, to the river’s side—
“ There, many cavaliers in expectation,
“ Are ready waiting for that information.”

LXXV.

They reached the grassy bank, where anxious stood
The numerous warriors in their several stations ;
Who when the dwarf had left the rippling flood,
Crowded around him with interrogations ;
The dwarf turned to them, as 'twas right he should,
And volubly fulfilled their expectations ;
“ To satisfy you, promptly I obey,
“ Listen, but be not wroth at what I say.

LXXVI.

“ After the Aigon faction was expelled ⁽²⁾
“ By the fierce Ghibellines from Modena,
“ Their chief, the Count Vallestra, was compelled ⁽³⁾
“ To fly beyond the province far away ;
“ And found, by magic art, which never failed,
“ A prize ; and formed among the mountains gray,
“ Close to his castle, an enchanted cell,
“ Where he remains, still framing charm and spell.

LXXVII.

“ And there he doating keeps an only child,
“ His name Melindo, of a tender age ; ⁽⁴⁾
“ Whose noble manners, and deportment mild,
“ The old man's fondness constantly engage ;
“ This stripling, by a damsel's fame beguiled,
“ Charmed by her feats, and beauty's cozenage,
“ Felt sick at heart with ever new desire,
“ And burned with unextinguishable fire.

LXXVIII.

- “ By prayers and sighs, he from his sire obtained
“ Permission to come here, his love to show ;
“ And, therefore, on this island he maintained
“ The beautiful combat, armed from top to toe ;
“ But the old man was timorous, and ordained
“ (The amorous youth being weaker than the foe)
“ That he through magic art should never yield,
“ Nor strength nor valour make him quit the field.

LXXIX.

- “ Such was the incantation, that no force
“ Could hurl the loved Melindo to the ground ;
“ Unless a warrior came, with spear and horse,
“ THE GREATEST COWARD THAT WAS EVER FOUND ;
“ The stronger the attack, so much the worse,
“ Victory more easily Melindo crowned ;
“ As the red bolt bursts with augmented wrath
“ The greater the resistance to its path.

LXXX.

- “ Javelin and horse, the armour which he wore,
“ All were enchanted, and the knight who drew
“ His sword soon saw the unequal contest o’er,
“ Forced from the island headlong out of view ;
“ Changing the lance was reckon’d fit—no more—
“ Even then not one the champion could subdue,
“ Unless he was discovered to be quite
“ Inferior to Melindo in the fight.”

LXXXI.

Here ceased the dwarf; chagrin was turned to joy

Among the conquered cavaliers; but Count
Culagna felt the bitter words annoy,

And wrath was seen upon his face to mount;
He drew his sword against the ancient boy, ⁽⁵⁾

Who fearless thought his threat of small account;
“Thou liest, false wretch!” the angry hero said:
“This sword shall prove it on thy villain’s head.

LXXXII.

“Wouldst thou my victory stain? But thou shalt not,

“Thou ugly hunch-back! Is not every where

“*My* glory known, without reproach, or blot?

“Thy master has not an excuse to spare!”

The dwarf refused to parly with the sot,

But humbly bowed to all the signors there;
And whilst the count kept wrangling on—“Good night,”
Was his reply, and then blew out the light.

NOTES TO THE NINTH CANTO.

One of the commentators, Salviani, complains that this canto has no comic spirit. It is however rich in burlesque.

1.

That Don Chisott, of errants prince and guide.

Stanza lxxii.

Don Chisotto, Don Quixote, immortalized by Cervantes.

2.

After the Aigon faction was expelled.

Stanza lxxvi.

The Aigoni, of the Guellic faction, were expelled from Modena in the year 1246.

3.

Their chief, the Count Vallestra.

Stanza lxxvi.

There was a story that there existed a treasure in the mountains of Vallestra guarded by devils, and the poet has adopted the vulgar belief, to make this episode.

4.

His name Melindo.

Stanza lxxvii.

Melindo is intended to be a son of Figlio del Fogliani, who was at that time Conte di Vallestra.

5.

He drew his sword against the ancient boy.

Stanza lxxxii.

The greatest proof of cowardice in a man is drawing his sword upon a person unable to contend with him.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO TENTH,

ARGUMENT.

*The Queen of Lore to Naples hies away,
And urges Manfred to resume his arms;
Renoppia fires the Count, so proud and gay,
And jokes him whilst his faithless heart she warms;
He takes it in his head, without delay,
His wife to poison; reaps himself its harms;
The wife flies to the camp, and gets a swain,
And poor Culagna reaps the fruits again.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO TENTH.

I.

THE car of Night had passed the circling line
Which separates dark Africa from Spain,
And still the glorious count, though stretched supine,
Continued sleepless, turning in his brain
Constantly how, with bravery divine,
He fought, and managed such renown to gain,
Since, through his happy stars, he had o'erthrown
The enchanted knight, the honour all his own.

II.

Then dwelling on the cause that had inspired
Melindo to ascend the fabulous boat,
He felt both worthy of the shield acquired
And of the beautiful damsel; for his thought
Was ever on himself, himself he admired,
Charmed with the proud distinction he had got;
For when the champion forfeited his claim,—
His surely was the honour, his the fame.

III.

With this conceit delighted he began
To think himself Renoppia's lover true ;
And secretly o'er all her beauties ran,
And brightly to himself those beauties drew ,
Now in her lovely eyes, enamoured man,
Now in her mien he basked, and doating grew ;
And as hope's flattery vanity supplied,
He wished, rejoiced, and wept, and laughed, and sighed.

IV.

A wife of loveliest beauty he possessed,
But every kindly thought from her had fled ;
With his new love so ardently imprest,
He seemed to touch the heavens with his head ;
Just as the dog in Æsop (dog unblest),
Whose clear reflection in the river played,
Dropt from his mouth the meat, to snatch its figure
Shadowed below, and seeming to be bigger.

V.

All night the count uneasy prest his cot,
And not a moment's slumber closed his eyes ;
Phœbus already had with aspect hot
Removed the dusky mantle from the skies ;
And on th' horizon found, celestial spot,
Aurora in Tithonus' arms ; surprise
Roused her, and blushing, from her golden bed,
Chemise in hand, she rose and nimbly fled.

VI.

Then also rose the count, and moved apace
 To where Renoppia's tent majestic stood,
 Singing extemporé with affected grace,
 And thrumming a guitar of tuneless wood ;
 He thought his voice might vastly aid his case,
 And win her kindness ; quite convinced it would,
 His brain he puzzled to find out a ditty
 Melodious, what they call in Tuscan *Prette*.

VII.

“ Thou beauty of the universe ! ” sang he,
 “ Thy good-will I deserve, at least, that's due ;
 “ For my opponent fell, o'erthrown by me,
 “ And lost his mistress and his glory too !
 “ Not for the silver on the shield, but thee !
 “ Was I spurred on to fight ; yes, thee to woo !
 “ The splendour of thy aspect gave me fire
 “ Thy heart to conquer was my sole desire.”

VIII.

Thus sung the enamoured count to her he loved,
 Whilst inwardly she laughed at his conceit.
 Venus meanwhile o'er ocean joyous roved,
 Viewing the dark-blue waters round her beat ;
 For she'd prepared a wondrous ship, and moved
 The gallant vessel, from the Arno sweet,
 To that soft-flowing stream which gently laves
 The Syren city with its lucid waves.⁽¹⁾

IX.

To instigate Taranto's prince, to arm
His valiant people for the mighty shock,
And save his brother from impending harm,
Imprisoned by the foe, disastrous stroke!
Forth sailed the vessel, breathing round a charm,
And keeping well at sea from sand or rock;
The goddess sat, in gold and azure veiled,
Upon the poop, from man and heaven concealed.

X.

Capraria and Gorgona having past,
She turns towards the left the glittering prow;
Leghorn, then Elba, famous for its vast
Ferruginous mines; and low Faleria now,
And Piombino are behind her cast;
Countries which still to Ocean's monarch bow;⁽²⁾
Where still the eagle, with triumphant wings,
O'er mountain, plain, and sea, his shadow flings.

XI.

The tremulous rays of the uprising sun
Quiver along the gold and purple main;
The laughing heavens with sapphire vestments on,
Reflect in the smooth waves his form again;
The gales of Afric and the East are gone
To gentle rest in Neptune's blue domain;
Zephyr alone with soft and joyous sighs
Ripples old Ocean's margin as she lies.

XII.

As the celestial beauty passes, Love's
Good fortune passes too, and lies unseen ;
The placid sea with softest murmurs moves,
Kissing the silvery shores and borders green ;
The fishes burn with love, the banks and groves,
Envy the favoured waters and their sheen ;
The little Loves attend the swelling sails,
The helm, the oars, and watch what wind prevails.

XIII.

In troops the dolphins joyfully escort
The sparkling bark upon its easy way ;
Smiling the sea-nymphs lightly dance and sport
On every side, unceasing in their play ;
She sees the Umbroné issuing from its port,
And Giglio to the southward, and the spray
Washing the dark and ruinous sides of steep
Mount Argentarius, 'mid the Tuscan deep.

XIV.

Here to the right before the wind she steers,
And on the left the port of Hercules
Recedes, Civita Vecchia now appears,
And all the glittering coast the goddess sees ;
Then Porto di Trajano, worn by years,
In miserable ruins, dome and frieze ;
Time whelms the tower, dissolves the marble bust,
The noblest works become a heap of dust.

XV.

The Tiber was not distant, when arose
From sleep, the South wind which in Lybia reigns ;
And rushing to the shore, indignant blows
Across the sea, and every check disdains ;
He sees the silver sails and inward glows
With daring thoughts—above the watery plains
He flies, to ask the lovely vessel's freight,
And finds the Queen of Beauty there in state.

XVI.

Thence fierce with envy, and insulting pride,
He turned to Zephyr : “ Stop, or I shall send
“ Thee to the centre of the sea !” he cried,—
“ From that abyss thou never wilt ascend ;
“ Nor raise again thy head ; it is denied
“ To thee, Jove's brightest daughter to befriend ;
“ Mine is the task, go, aid the swallow's way,
“ And make the asses warble love in May.”

XVII.

Zephyr, thus suddenly assailed, conveyed
The news to his bold brother, who was sleeping
Upon the Alps, and was not disobeyed ;
For when the North wind, from his slumber leaping,
Heard of the insult, he such wrath displayed,
And burned with fury so intense and sweeping,
That houses were unroofed, trees downwards hurled,
And ocean's sand to heaven impetuous whirled.

XVIII.

The South wind, seeing at a distance come,
Both brothers blustering, bellowing in the ear ;
Prepares for the attack, nor dreads the gloom
Their fury threatens, whether far or near ;
He gathers his extremest strength, and from
The shores of Afric springs ; as his compeer,
He summons to his aid the fierce Siroc,
The wind of Syria, for a heavier shock.

XIX.

Quick the Sirocco came, and thence amid
The waves dire battle raged—and overhead,
Dense rolling clouds the sun's refulgence hid,
The air o'er all its gloomiest mantle spread ;
Hoarse howled the winds, whose horrid voices chid
The sea and shores, enough to raise the dead ;
It seemed as Ocean's monarch in his car,
Against his brother was denouncing war.

XX.

Burst the dark clouds, fire issues from the rent,
And radiant darts o'er the celestial plain ;
The fire, the air, the watery element,
And heaven are mixed, confusion holds her reign ;
Deep thunders roll, the furious winds augment,
In wrath ; again they bellow, and again ;
The sea curls up and rears its livid head,
Against the heavens, the heavens with fury red

XXI.

The low flat coast of Ostia had receded,
And Anzio risen to view, when Beauty's Queen
The rumour heard, and saw how gust succeeded
O'erwhelming gust, and blackened all the scene;
She saw the nymphs, how fleetly they proceeded
From the vexed, angry sea, with fearful mien;
Disdainful then she threw her veil aside,
And showed herself to heaven in all her beauty's pride;

XXII.

And menacing the tempest, cold and drear,
The whirlwind, and the storm, away she chased
From heaven the clouds, and made the elements clear
And tranquil with her lovely eyes; repressed,
The winds at once betrayed submissive fear,
Quiet and trembling at the wrath expressed;
Upon the south wind then she fixed her look,
And biting her own finger threatening spoke.

XXIII.

“ Moor! dog! unprincipled and lawless, off! ⁽³⁾
“ I'll teach thee with this battling spirit, how
“ To strive with me; thou hast presumed enough,
“ Get back to thy own country!”—Mark him, bow,
And kneel, and kiss her heavenly feet, and puff,
And beg her pardon for his crime; and now
Departing turn to Africa again,
Whilst the gay vessel onward ploughs the main.

XXIV.

With crimson gowns, and turbans on the head,
 Nettun's fair damsels on the beach are seen ;
She passes close Astura, where betrayed
 In his disastrous flight was Corradin.*
God, for that deed, a punishment has laid
 Upon the land—which from that time has been
Desert and waste ; now Mount Circell appears,
His feet amidst the sea, his head to heaven he rears.

XXV.

Onward she goes, and rapid leaves behind
 Ponzia and Palmarola, where of yore
By tyrant Rome the illustrious were confined,
 Secret and lonely. Scattered on the shore
Gleam various towers ;—before the buxom wind
 Swift flies the vessel, now is seen no more
Dim Terracena ; now remote is found
Upon the left Gäeta—place renowned.

XXVI.

Gäeta now is passed, and sailing on
 She gains Procida, steering near its coast ;
And then Puzzolo, long familiar known
 For its sulphureous streets ; that too is lost ;
Then comes Nisida, with an emerald zone,
 Whence is beheld bright Naples and its boast,
The glorious bay ; and seemingly with glee
The Queen of Ocean greets the Goddess of the Sea⁽⁴⁾

* Nephew of Frederic II.

XXVII.

The goddess from Nisida quickly sends
To Manfred ; alters her bewitching face,
And takes, as she upon the beach descends,
The Countess of Caserta's form and grace ;⁽⁵⁾
The countess and the prince, so fame pretends,
Were born of the same father, envied race ;
But different mothers, and were, for awhile,
Fostered and reared each on a different soil.

XXVIII.

Though still but children they to court were brought,
And in the royal palace, unrestrained,
Together lived, until a change was wrought,
And playful they a riper age attained ;
Their years were almost equal, both were fraught
With beauty in perfection ; thence, unfeigned,
I know not how, they owned a stronger flame,
And love fraternal haply changed its name.

XXIX.

Within the father's breast, suspicion rising,
From act and look, he married off the maid ;
But though thus parted, can it be surprising !
Their constant souls still kept the vows they made.
The courier now is faithfully apprizing,
Young Manfred of the message he conveyed.
And thence the prince, whom nothing now impedes,
Quick to his sister secretly proceeds.

XXX.

He finds her near a rifted rock's rude base,
In a delicious garden walking ; there
He lands, and quickly in a close embrace,
Love urges him to strain that goddess fair ;
Her mouth and eyes he kisses, and her face,
And in those kisses, sweet beyond compare,
Sucks so much poison, so much fire that he
Burns with intense delight, and ecstasy.

XXXI.

He wished those ardent kisses to renew,
Those dear embraces ; but the goddess bright
His greedy biting lips repelling, threw
Upon her blushing cheeks a rosy light,
And said : " That wild temerity subdue,
" And those licentious wishes, valiant knight ;
" For these in sign and manner have no claim
" To brother's kisses ; hear me why I came."

XXXII.

The prince obeyed, and when she had detailed
The dreadful fate of Enzo, who had lost
The flower of his brave cavaliers, and failed,
Himself a prisoner, all his wishes crost ;
She dried her tears, and said :—" The foe prevailed,
" But thou dost now my father's station boast,
" 'Tis thine to show his blood still pure in thee,
" That Suabia's hand is vigorous still and free."⁽⁶⁾

XXXIII.

“ You, who the reins of these dominions hold,
“ You can remove from our illustrious sire,
“ And brother, this opprobrium; rise, be bold,
“ And arm by sea and land; never was higher
“ Adventure—fortune never yet did mould
“ A fitter time, and valour more require,
“ For deeds of glory, such as earth nor sea
“ Ever beheld;—the palm but waits for thee.

XXXIV.

“ If I were not a woman, with this hand
“ I’d sally forth their arrogance to quell;
“ Nor should they feel secure on any strand,
“ Nor ever more a tale of triumph tell;
“ First should they come in humble guise and stand
“ Before me, ropes about their necks, as well
“ As round their loins, and thus for pardon sue,
“ Give back my brother, arms, and city too.

XXXV.

“ O God! why was I made a woman? why
“ My slender hand unused to arms and blood?”
Here did she sparkle so transcendently,
The wondering prince in pale amazement stood;
Trembled his heart,—like withered leaf and dry,
Without all cold, within a boiling flood;
He wished to stretch his hand, her charms to seize,
But secret terror seemed his soul to freeze.

XXXVI.

At length with tremulous voice the prince replied :

- “ My sister, queen, my goddess !—into fire
“ I’ll rush, aye midst the ocean’s central tide,
“ To the earth’s core, if it be thy desire,
“ And path be found ;—my sceptre is, beside,
“ And all within my power thou can’st require
“ At thy command—all, all, yes, all that’s mine ;
“ My heart and sword eternally are thine.”

XXXVII.

Thus saying he extends his arms to strain

His sister’s beautiful bosom to his own,
But the bright goddess makes the effort vain,
And quick retires ;—her borrowed form is gone ;
And now her first immortal shape again

She wears, and and on the stripling looking down
Flings from her purple lap ambrosial flowers,
And o’er his head a cloud of roses showers.

XXXVIII.

“ Beauty of heaven ! immortal goddess, hear !

- “ O, whither dost thou fly ? why leave me now ?
“ In my distress wilt thou not hover near,
“ And pleasure to these longing eyes allow ?”

Thus spoke the royal youth with grief sincere,

And turned his sorrowing steps to where his prow
Sat on the waters ; roused by the alarm,
His kingdom he at once resolved to arm.

XXXIX.

But Count Culagna, meantime, having seen
Renoppia issue from her tent, began
To smooth his beard, adjust his cloak, and mien,
And draw a plume in front, bewitching man!
To grace his casque ; and then, as to his queen,
With bended knee-joints to salute her ran,
And almost touched the ground ;—she knew his worth
And called him to her—for a moment's mirth.

XL.

She praised his valour, his exalted mind,
His intrepidity, his flowing wit ;
And swore a knight so gentle, so refined,
So worthy of her love, in all things fit,
She never found ; to him she'd have been kind,
But he in wedlock was already knit ;
And this sweet flattery, as the damsel smiled,
Made the poor wretch superlatively wild.

XLI.

Him Titta meets upon a lonely plain,
Strutting, o'ershadowed by a chesnut-tree ;⁽⁷⁾
And parleying with himself in frantic strain,
Now quick, now slow, he strides affectedly ;
And now to Titta tells his joy and pain,
And whispers to him confidentially ;
“ Brother !” he says, “ I must get rid of grief,
“ My wife must die to give my soul relief !

XLII.

“ No doubt 'tis infinitely grievous,—still,
“ My cruel stars compel me to be cruel.”
Then he relates why he resolves to kill,
And what Renoppia said, his radiant jewel !
Titta pretends the story makes him thrill,
But calls him happy—though about to do ill ;
“ Count, thou wert born a pope ;—I tell thee too,
“ Thou hast no parallel ! ah, rogue ! it's true.”

XLIII.

Upon the way he learns his inmost thought,
And so cajoles him that his swelling heart
Beats quick and high, with wonderous pleasure fraught ;
He shakes himself, and sings with accent smart ;
Talks gaily of his hopes, and of his plot,
Boasting of the exploit in every part ;
Titta hears all—gives to his purpose life ; [wife.”
“ For not a soul will ever know, who killed thy darling

XLIV.

Titta himself was smitten with the dame,
The lady of the Count, and often he
Had told the genuine ardour of his flame ;
And all the maids knew what he wished to be ;
Now that he sees the husband's plot and aim,
To make him pay for his own perfidy,
He writes to her the sudden change, and further,
By what foul means the Count intends her murder.

XLV.

The wife is grateful for the knight's civility,
And cautiously prepares herself to meet him;
Informs her servants, that with more facility
She with his own base weapons may defeat him;
The Count proceeds with cool inflexibility,
And takes aside, determined well to treat him,
Doctor Sigonio, offers him a bribe ⁽⁸⁾
Of gold and silver, if he will prescribe;

XLVI.

And furnish him with poison,—quick and sure,
For which no remedy existeth,—saying
He could not now his wicked wife endure
Since she had played him false, her vows betraying;
He said he was resolved to work her cure
Himself, she dearly for her folly paying;
Long did Sigonio pause upon the barter,
Then gave a dose of pure emetic tartar.

XLVII.

The Count believes it poison,—and one day
Proceeds to Modena, salutes his lady,
Who seeming unsuspecting, pleased, and gay,
Salutes him too, still circumspect and steady;
He then runs o'er the house, and speeds away,
To th' kitchen, there to make the poison ready,
But finds himself so watched, and so perplexed,
He knows not what to do nor what consider next.

XLVIII.

Now he returns, ascends the stairs again,
Quite breathless, sorrow pictured in his face ;
And panting waits until the menial train
The victuals on the dinner table place ;
In his wife's soup he snugly scatters then
The powder, feigning, with a guilty grace,
That it was pepper, and to make it good,
Rattled the pepper-pot which near him stood.

XLIX.

Now joins the board the cunningest of wives,
And whilst he cleans his hands, and makes them dry,
Turns herself round, and, back to him, contrives
To change the soup, then slips unheeded by,
And shows her own hands washed, and still connives,
But glances every where, and will not try
A morsel,—eat, nor taste, nor quench her thirst,
Unless her roguish husband tries it first.

L.

The Count ate quickly and then went away,
Not anxious to behold his wife expire !
To the Piazza he was found to stray,
Where people congregate : there all inquire
(Soon as they see him, lately from the fray)
What news he brings, and answering their desire
For news he tells them many a bouncing story,
And many a lie about his fame and glory.

LI.

So much he warms, and such his animation,
In telling idle tales of empty wind ;
That lo ! the drug begins its operation,
And turns his stomach—sweetly had he dined :
The people stand and stare with consternation,
As he keeps vomiting ; to death inclined,
Through fear, and calling a confessor to him,
And swearing it is poison working through him.

LII.

Coltra and Galliano, druggists two,
Ran with bolarmeno and mithridate.⁽⁹⁾
The doctors brought their urinals, in view,
To find the poison's quality and state ;
A hundred barbers, priests with missals flew,
Towards him, tearing from his chest the weight
Of clothes, and exclaiming: " Non temere,"
And urging him to sing, devoutly, " Miserere."

LIII.

Some oil, some treacle, bolted down his throat,
Some melted grease, and others loads of butter ;
So harassed was he by the things he got,
He hardly had the power one word to utter ;
When suddenly he found himself afloat,
And so impetuous was the dreadful splutter,
That the bright amber, far from being sweet,
Ran through his galligaskins to his feet.

LIV.

“ O powers of heaven ! what’s this unwholesome savour,”
A barber cried when he the odour found ;
“ ’Tis mortal poison, and contagious—never
“ Did smell so strong my nasal nerves confound ;
“ Carry him off, or he will breed a fever ;
“ The town will be infected all around.”
But so tumultuous was the mob, so tost,
Doctor Cavalca’s life was nearly lost.

LV.

As cardinals at Montecavallo thread
The winding staircase to the consistory,
And are impeded by the crowds a-head,
Pushing along—all jostling in their hurry ;
So here the priests and doctors, squeezed, delayed,
Finding no way to get out from the skerry,
Elbow, and push, and edge, without cessation,
Yet can’t escape from that conglomeration.

LVI.

But when the ambergris had issued out,
And the mephitic air was spread abroad,
Each held with gloves his own insulted snout,
And backward shrunk—and soon made clear the road ;
Abandoned was the Count by all the rout,
All, save one priest who (just arrived) bestowed
Some pity on him, for no stink oppressed him,
(Having no nose) and presently confessed him.

LVII.

Confessed he was ; by opportune assistance,
Placed on a ladder, and the smell he gave
Made all the people hurry to a distance ;
Two porters bore him home, his life to save,
And put him in the hall—without resistance,
And then called for the servants ; not a slave
Was to be found, except an ancient crone,
Who clattering came with a shoe and patten on.

LVIII.

At home already had they heard the news,
That the poor Count of poison was expiring ;
And thence his wife, a cunning course pursues,
Saddling her husband's horse, herself attiring
In manly habit, and to aid her views
Putting a soldier's hat on—thus retiring
Unmarked in secret, she to camp proceeded,
In search of Titta, whose advice she needed.

LIX.

To him she sent a joyful message, stating
That one of the Count's pages was at hand,
With something that would please his fancy, waiting ;
Away he went, 'twas to him a command ;
And looking up, himself felicitating,
Knew his sweet mistress, heard her accents bland ;
And to dismount, his aid immediate lent,
And in his arms conveyed her to his tent.

LX.

And eagerly he kissed her mouth, and prest
Her to his heart, and gazed with admiration ;
And she on him, desiring, yet distressed,
Turn'd languidly her eye's illumination.
Some thought it rather singular, at best,
Because she was supposed a male creation ;
For they could not distinguish by her dress
But why should I their foolishness express ?

LXI.

All day the Count continued in his bed,
Thus all the night, and following day were past ;
Alarm and horror almost turned his head,
Thinking that every hour would be his last ;
This gave the lovers time to bake their bread,
To banquet after an unpleasant fast,
And highly they enjoy'd the comic thought,
How the great Count, in his own trap was caught.

LXII.

Now had Sigonio told in Titta's ear
The joke about the poison ; *he* repeated
The story to the dame, who laughed to hear
How soon her vengeance on him was completed,
Intending to remain for ever near
Her new admirer, and no more be cheated ;
Because, so pleasant was her situation ;
Why should she wish for change or alteration.

LXIII.

But when the Count was gravely certified,

By all the doctors in full consultation,
That he was out of danger,—forth he hied

In arms towards the camp—all perturbation
About his wife, and there he was supplied

By one of his own corps, with information
About his horse ; on which a boy was seen,
But since nor boy, nor horse, in sight had been.

LXIV.

The wondering Count began to ruminate

Upon his loss—and who the youth could be ;
Then promised a reward, to stimulate

The avarice of some spy ; next morning he
Was faithfully informed (how fortunate)

That Titta had his horse ; the man his fee
Forthwith demanded, doubtless 'twas his due,
But the Count laughed, and swore it was untrue ;

LXV.

And sends one of his men to Titta, telling

What his accuser had presumed to mention ;
Titta declares, some foe with envy swelling

Has framed the charges to promote dissension ;
But, meantime, he is most intensely dwelling

On thoughts, how he may, and by what invention,
Tint the said horse's hair, which now is gray,
And make it to the sight a glossy bay.

LXVI.

This done, he calls, by way of demonstration,
The Count, in a dim light, among his stud ;
The Count not finding, on examination,
His gallant gray,—he did not think he should—
Apologized ; it gave a new occasion
Of proof, that Titta's character was good ;
But not a word he spoke about his dame,
Whom still he anxious sought though not by name.

LXVII.

And swears a page has carried off his steed ;
He knows not whither the vile wretch has gone,
But if he finds him, for the felon-deed
He'll have him punished at the culprit-stone ;
Titta, who sees he's from suspicion freed,
Now cogitates what further can be done
To keep the lively lady under cover,
And the Count ignorant of his manœuvre.

LXVIII.

They both agree, and pour on chesnut bark
Water distilled, a lotion thus preparing ;
And with it make her fine complexion dark,
Neck, face, and hands, no skill nor trouble sparing ;
The wash destroys the white, and both remark,
“ A Mauritanian born, in look and bearing,”
But though of sable tawney was her face,
She still retained her own peculiar grace.

LXIX.

As crimson cloth, a darker colour dyed,
Retains its pristine texture and still shines
To sight, still purple, peering as with pride
Through the black tint, and both the hues combines
So the false colour, to her face applied,
Turns not its pristine charm, and beauteous lines;
It glows with native warmth, and from her eyes,
Still beautiful, the wonted lightning flies.

LXX.

In vest of azure, trimmed with radiant gold,
She now is robed, and, from her neck and breast,
A Moorish garment, sparkling every fold,
Flows loosely; lovelier thus superbly dressed.
Titta now shows her to the Count: "Behold!
" This thankless slave with sorrow breaks my rest,
" Her heart my passion has no power to move,
" Beg her, my Count, to give me all her love!"

LXXI.

The Count in Candiotto spoke his mind,
And she replied to him in Calabrese:
" Beautiful Moor!" he said, " be not unkind,
" But thy fond master ever seek to please!"
Turning to Titta she herself resigned
Into his arms, and he in ecstasies
Drew from her coral lip the joy he wanted,
His soul was by her kisses sweet enchanted.

LXXII.

Confounded was the Count to see their zeal,
And how with fond endearment they caressed ;
Titta, to him, seemed raging mad, to feel
For her the torments which he had expressed ;
Long had this lasted for their mutual weal,
Had not the youth's relations shrewdly guess'd,
And known the whole—the Potta, too, acquainted
With Titta's conduct, further fun prevented.

LXXIII.

The Potta ordered privately away
The lady from the camp, a sad disgrace !
And Titta having, in that noisy fray,
Beaten a saucy bailiff in the face ;
It was decided he should smartly pay,
And be conducted, as the fittest place,
To the Palazzo prison, in the city ;—
When he began a most outrageous ditty ;

LXXIV.

That he was to the pope a near relation, ⁽¹⁰⁾
A Roman baron too, and wished to go
Into the castle, but a fine oration
The judges made, and Andrea Bargelo ;
Showing most clearly, that the habitation
In the Palazzo was the best, and so
Having been promised all, in good repair,
He was content to take his lodgings there.

NOTES TO THE TENTH CANTO.

1.

The Syren city with its lucid waves.

Stanza viii.

The Syren city.—Naples was formerly called Parthenope, from the name of one of the Syrens, who was buried there.

2.

Countries which still to Ocean's monarch bow.

Stanza x.

Re de l'Oceano.—The Emperor of Germany, called King of the Ocean, from his vast dominions in the sea, which extend, says the commentator, from the Pillars of Hercules, to the Antarctic pole.

3.

Moor! dog! unprincipled and lawless, off!

Stanza xxiii.

The wind is here called Moor, because coming from Mauritania, where the people are without law or true religion.

4.

The Queen of Ocean greets the Goddess of the Sea.

Stanza xxvi.

Venus is called the Goddess of the Sea, because born of the

sea, and Naples the Queen of the Sea, because the mistress or ruler of that sea.

5.

The Countess of Caserto.

Stanza xxvii.

Manfredi, Prince of Tarrento, and afterwards King of Naples, was actually enamoured of the Countess de Caserta, his sister.

6.

*'Tis thine to show his blood still pure in thee
That Suabia's hand is vigorous still and free.*

Stanza xxxii.

He was the son of Frederic il Losca, or the purblind, Duke of Suabia (the first Emperor Frederic called Barbarossa). His son Henry the Sixth was the father of Frederic the Second, and from the latter came Manfredi and Enzius, both bastard sons. To them Tassoni alludes.

7.

O'ershadowed by a chesnut tree.

Stanza xli.

Why the Count di Culagna should be under a chesnut tree, and not an elm, or an oak, is a mystery, says the sage commentator, rather difficult to penetrate.

8.

Doctor Sigonio.

Stanza xlv.

Isidoro Sigonio was a contemporary of the author, and died in 1603.

9.

Ran with bolarmeno and mithridate.

Stanza lii.

Mithridate and bolarmeno, both given as astringents. The mithridate of that day was composed of myrrh, crocus, agaric, ginger, spikenard, galbanum, turpentine, and other drugs.

10.

That he was to the pope a near relation.

Stanza lxxiv.

Here he adopts what Titta says in the forty-second stanza.

The judges were Fiscal Sudenti, Barbanera, and Andrea Bargello. Culagna thought that a relation of the pope, as he pretended to be, ought not to be conducted to the prison in Torredinona, but to the castle of St. Angelo.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO ELEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.

*The Count Culagna enters full of ire,
And Titta challenges to mortal fight:
But when from prison Titta's freed, his fire
Subsides, and he attempts a coward's sleight;
At last he goes, and, in the combat dire,
A scarlet ribbon puts him in a fright!
Titta his victory tells with exultation,
And afterwards repents of the narration.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO ELEVENTH.

I.

ALREADY Fame had, in a thousand ways,
Publicly shown the Count his infamy;
And made him view himself, not crowned with bays,
But with Actæon's chaplet; wrathful, he
More rancour now against his wife betrays;
He seeks revenge for shame and injury;
And charges her with poisoning, when and how,
And violation of the marriage vow.

II.

Now through the universal camp was known
What previously was hid, or but suspected;
The woman in an independent tone
Soon cleared herself, and him to scorn subjected;
And all laughed loud to see him overthrown,
With all the shame upon himself collected;
To see how she rewarded the deceiver,
Who had been nearly purged of soul and liver.

III.

The Count, who found all efforts were in vain
Against her, for his foul designs had failed,
Thought of another scheme, and his disdain
Poured upon Titta, whom he then assailed;
He knew the prison must his arm restrain.
Spite of himself, of all his powers curtailed;
And, therefore, calls him traitor, and, "He lies,"
Adds the fierce Knight, "If he the fact denies!"⁽¹⁾

IV.

And swears with sword and lance he will maintain
His word, in public, or in private fight;
And that the challenge some renown may gain
His cards are duly stamped, in black and white;
And boasts, in rather an affected vein,
How that he cannot even if he might,
(However well the challenge should apply)
Submit to a proud adversary's lie!

V.

But Titta's friends as soon as they had read
The haughty challenge, joined with such effect
In his behalf—such interest too was made,
That all proceedings against him were checked;
And, as he had some gallantry displayed,
Against Bologna, and the Pope Elect,
At once released him, as a Ghibelline,
Without exacting even a farthing fine.

VI.

Soon as released, he to the battle turns
His thoughts, and with a fixed determination
Prepares his arms, his capering horse, and burns
For single combat ; he had no occasion
For aid, or counsel,—both of course he spurns ;
Yet just before a knight of reputation
Had come from Rome, a Tuscanella reckoned,
And him he chose, Attilio, for his second.

VII.

This was a little man, acute and quick,
Inventor of facetiæ, and so keen ;
For subterfuge, evasion, cunning trick,
Equal to him no Jew had ever been ;
Poets he quizzed, but never splenetic,
Numbers for fun were near him always seen ;
His manners were so pleasant, droll, polite,
That every one approached, and left him, with delight.

VIII.

For deeds of arms he was not much renowned,
Because in Rome it chanced to be the fashion
To box ; and boxing had great favour found,
Which put the Roman governor in a passion.
But valiant as Orlando, he was bound
To take the field, because, resolved to dash on,
He'd killed his man in some nocturnal brawl,
And feared the bailiff's vengeance,—that was all.

IX.

The Count perceiving all his schemes were lost,
All scattered to the winds,—his plans defeated ;
With friends consulted, if at any cost,
Peace might be made ; and he would have retreated,
Out of the perilous enterprize, engrossed
By feelings rather strong, and deeply seated ;
For timid grew his heart, his courage oozing
Away, amidst his wrath—a skin uninjured choosing.

X.

But Count Miceno, and the Potta too,
Manfred, Roldano, and the brave Gherard,
Were near him and explained (to honour true)
How he was forfeiting the world's regard ;
Then they all promised they would see him through,
And interfere, if with him it went hard.
Thence he called up a most courageous look
And for his second Valentino took.

XI.

This man was skilled in fencing, and he taught
Him masterly manœuvres ; how to wound
His adversary in the chest, or throat ;
And how to parry strokes, and change his ground ;
Then all the warrior's arms to him were brought,
These he examined with regard profound ;
But to a coward heart, all vain pretence,
A hundred arsenals would be no defence.

XII.

The night before the battle, what a night !

How did the Count, fatigued, distressed in mind,
Ponder upon the dread impending fight,

The mortal contest, peacefully inclined ;
Grievous his thoughts, revolving how he might
Avoid the encounter, how a rescue find ;
And long ere dawn, a little diabolic,
Roared to his servants he had got the colic.

XIII.

His second, who reposed at no great distance,

Was wakened by the uproar in affright ;
His groom, Bertoccio, ran to give assistance,
With cloths made hot, and in his hand a light ;
The barber, and the sexton of Ambristans, ⁽²⁾
Arrived at once, to comfort the poor knight ;
And nature wanting something to assist her,
Forthwith the barber made a powerful clyster.

XIV.

And fearful of exciting some suspicion,

The Count refused not, anxious to deceive ;
But feigning after, that its exhibition
Had no effect, nor had it, to relieve,
He called his friends and servants, and physician,
Near him to will what he had got to leave ;
The notary quick was sent for, Mortain—
Who came, the schedule ready to begin.

XV.

Imprimis: he to heaven his soul resigned,
His body to the spot where first he breathed;
And to the church, to ease his sinful mind,
Money he had not, and some land, bequeathed;
Then puffed with vanity his arms resigned,
(The pointed weapons round him lay unsheathed)
He left his lance, the meteor of the field,
To Tartary's king—to Syria's prince, his shield;

XVI.

To Frederic the Emperor, his sword;
His corslet to the Romans; to the Queen
Of the Adriatic, honoured and adored,
A glove, and bracelet of transcendent sheen;
And Florence, for the other, had his word;⁽³⁾
To the Greek King his skull's high polished screen;
But the fine plume, he flourished "*in battaglia*,"
He said must be returned to Signor Cornovaglia.

XVII.

He left his Honour to the Potta's City,
The remnant of his chattels to his Squire.
Meanwhile around his bed in jest, or pity,
A crowd had met to see what might transpire;
Among them was Roldano, it was fit he
Attended there; believing not the liar;
He whispered in his ear with cautious haste,
"Count, you are now eternally disgraced;

XVIII.

“ Do you not see that they have found you out ?
“ That fear alone has made you sham so sick ?
“ Jump up, and quickly too, no longer pout,
“ Or shame will to us all, and mockery stick ;
“ You shall be parted, wherefore should you doubt,
“ Soon as the fight commences—so be quick.”
The Count shrugged up himself, and in reply,
Said he would rise, but was afraid to try.

XIX.

Meanwhile from tent to tent, the news had flown,
And there was mighty laughter every where ;
Renoppia, who had not from couch of down
Uprisen, dispatched a courier to declare,
That she was ready him to serve and own,
And bear him company—his peril share ;
Quite sure that such brave efforts would be made,
She would be proud of having given him aid.

XX.

This embassy transfixed his trembling heart,
And woke his sleeping shame, and then began,
“ Twixt cowardice and honour, combat smart,
Within the mind of the enamoured man ;
He now sits up in bed, a sudden start,
And says he’s easier (though prodigious wan)
“ By her sweet favour !” Now to dress he tries,
But Cowardice feigns a pang, and down again he lies.

XXI.

The paintress of the East, tinting the skies
With her own lovely colour, beautified
The track of new-born day, and flowers of dyes
Various and brilliant, Flora's lap supplied;
Then came the Sun's bright car, whose splendid rise,
And beams of light, mantled the prospect wide,
Air, sea, and mountains, with refulgent gold;
And night was from the clear horizon rolled;

XXII.

When Miceno entered, with his friend
Doctor Cavalca;—well the Doctor knew
The Count's disease, and what way it would end;
He from the water this prognostic drew;
And then did he most strongly recommend
Some old Malvazia, rich in taste and hue;
And gave him without fear or hesitation
Three tumblers of that excellent potation.

XXIII.

The wine produced a gradual effect,
And warmed his heart so cowardly and vile;
And to the stupid brain was sent direct
The subtle vapour, which provoked a smile;
Then cried the Count: "These bumpers I respect,
"They've cured at once my colic and my bile,"
And darting out of bed 'withouten ail,'
He promptly donned in his accustomed mail.

XXIV.

Drawing his sword with furious indignation,
He slashed the zephyrs and the summer air ;
Had not the second checked his agitation,
He then had bolted headlong to the war,
Half armed. The noble juice whose stimulation
Stirs up the timid, is more powerful far
Than natural courage ; well the ancients said,
Wine has more power than kings, or armies tyrant-led. ⁽⁴⁾

XXV.

Now while he arms, behold Renoppia come ;
His valour she redoubles, to befriend him ;
And with sweet words, and eyes that fix his doom,
Love-sparkling, offers kindly to attend him ;
Already ardent flames his veins consume,
Moved by desire, beyond what Hope could lend him,
And by the maddening wine ; upon his knees
He falls, and to her lovely eyes, breathes words like these :

XXVI.

“ O laughing stars, that grace the heaven of love !
“ On which my wretched life depends, my all ;
“ O, ye are fortune’s burning wheels that move
“ My bliss or ruin, as ye rise or fall ;
“ Images of the sun, the sun above,
“ Sparks of that fire, which keeps the soul in thrall ;
“ Whose beams, whose flashes, as inflamed they dart,
“ Dazzle the intellect, and burn the heart.

XXVII.

- “ Eyes of my soul, sweet pupils, mirrors bright,
“ Where peerless beauty doth itself admire ;
“ Eye-brows celestial, from whose beauteous height
“ Love throws his glowing arrows, tipt with fire ;
“ Your lovely features pour delicious light
“ Upon my heart, which, panting with desire,
“ Envies not heaven its stars, as others do,
“ Though it has many, and you only two.

XXVIII.

- “ As the sun’s rays inflame the earth, and spread
“ Around her blooming form a purple vest ;
“ So thy all powerful rays my heart invade,
“ And fill with pleasing thoughts my longing breast ;
“ My soul uplifts itself to God, who made
“ Thee, perfect work ! most perfectly exprest ;
“ And soars beyond mortality’s confine ;
“ O, lovelier than the eyes of heaven are thine.

XXIX.

- “ Regard me with a joyous gaze, thou bright
“ And faithful torch of my existence ! blind
“ Except for thee ; direct me to the fight
“ With loving looks, and be a witness kind
“ To all my peril, that the enemy’s might
“ And counsel may be vain, to scorn consigned ;
“ I care not, I, to fight with him pell-mell
“ I will even challenge to the combat, hell !”

XXX.

This saying, up he rose ; all fire and flame,
In countenance and act, called for his steed,
And quite astonished those who thought him tame,
So altered that he looked of noble breed ;
Already Titta, eager after fame,
Was seen in camp, such was his knightly speed ;
His armour plume and mantle were of black,
And no one but his second at his back.

XXXI.

The anxious people now impatient wait
The coming of the Count, and murmur loud :
The benches are all filled, the topmost seat
Groans with the weight of the encircling crowd ;
And from the past they augur that his fate
Will be disastrous to a spirit proud ;
When suddenly was heard the trumpet's clang,
And a pavilion opened as the echoes rang.

XXXII.

And lo ! by fifty valiant knights attended,
The first in rank of that prodigious host,
The Count appeared ; and to the list descended,
A white and brilliant upper-vest his boast ;
Upon a horse with armour rich defended,
Seeming all fire, so high his head he tost ;
He snorts, neighs, bites his bit, the earth behind
Strikes with his hoofs, and battles with the wind.

XXXIII.

His head and hands are naked, but his breast

Armed with a cuirass; right before, the fair
Renoppia holds his helm, and waving crest,

The good Gherard is seen his sword to bear,
That famous sword, Chisotto's, and the best :

The second holds the sheath, to Roldan's care
Is given the lance ; thus all their friendship prove,
Volucé has his shield, and Jocopin a glove.

XXXIV.

Bertoldo has the other, the two spurs

Lanfranc and Galeotto ; and on high
Upon a stick, the Count Alberto stirs

The cap which lines the helmet, solemnly ;
But, after all, one of the interpreters,

Zannin comes trotting, from the tent hard by,
Upon an ass, carrying across his spall,
Umbrella, tooth-brush, and a urinal.

XXXV.

When the brave Count was harnessed cap-a-pie,

And for the fight th' arena was prepared,
The trumpets gave the signal merrily,

Both horses rushed like whirlwinds o'er the sward ;
Titta was struck upon the chest, but he

Had armour which the blow repelled, though hard ;
The Count in that attack, so truly grand,
Let his lance fall out of his trembling hand.

XXXVI.

By Titta he was struck upon the throat,
Between the helm and border of the shield ;
So fierce a blow, and with such fury fraught,
That he bent back, and in his saddle reeled ;
It cut the gorget and such ruin wrought,
The visor opened, and across the field
The corslet sparkled ; fragments of the spear
Flew up to heaven—then quaked the Count with fear.

XXXVII.

Down fell his visor, down he looked and spied
His upper vest beerimsoned ; then he screamed,
“ Alas ! I'm dead ! ” and turned his eyes aside
Towards his squire, his eyes with horror gleamed ;
“ Help, for my soul is flitting through my side ;
“ Help, quickly help ! ” in hoarsest accents streamed ;
A hundred persons answered to that sound,
And took him from his horse, for he had swooned.

XXXVIII.

They bore him to his tent, put him to bed,
And there stripp'd off his shining arms and clothes ;
The surgeon doffed the helmet from his head,
And then to shrive him soon the priest arose ;
His friends, in fact, believed him to be dead,
And each to give his own opinion chose ;
It seemed to them quite wrong, they all confest,
To put a man, like him, to such a test.

XXXIX.

Titta who sees his adversary yield,
And carried off for dead towards his tent ;
Struts to the sound of trumpets round the field.
And to his friends returns to tell th' event ;
So arrogant, he thinks his fame is sealed,
Greater than Mars himself, and quite content,
He 'lights, but ere disarmed, a moment snatches,
And sends to Rome a courier with dispatches.

XL.

He writes of a prodigious man of might,
Famed in these parts, a knight of high renown ;
Perhaps a greater never armed for fight,
Nor was there one more powerful ever known ;
He says he'd heart enough to scorn his spite,
And dare him to a mortal tug alone ;
And in the presence of both camps had prest,
At the first shock, his weapon through his breast.

XLI.

He sent the news to Gaspar Salviani,
Dean of the Accademia de' Mancini,
That he might tell it to the Frangipani,
Signors of Nemi, and their friends Ursini ;
To him of Pozzo, and the two Romani,
Great geniuses. Cesi and Cesarini ;
But more especially to Prince Borghese,
And Simon Tassi, the Pavul Marchese.

XLII.

Soon as they heard about the enterprize,

They all concurred that he must be insane,
Meanwhile the Count, stripped of his armour lies,
The fears of death had stupified his brain ;
Two surgeons search at once, with anxious eyes,
Where he is wounded, but they search in vain ;
And not discovering even the skin abraded,
None ever laughed, or quizzed a man as they did.

XLIII.

The Count observed: " Look narrowly, I pray !

" My upper vest is covered o'er with gore ;
" Deceive me not in this kind hearted way,
" My soul is ready, I shall grieve no more."

The upper vest, still glancing many a ray,

Is brought, and every atom they explore ;
But not a stain, nor ought like blood, is found,
Except a scarlet ribbon, which was bound

XLIV.

Gaily about the neck, and loosely fell

Down to the waist. Then all were satisfied ;
All saw distinctly, and could truly tell

What was the wound of which he nearly died ;
At last perceiving his delusion, well

He turned the joke, rejoicing as with pride ;
And, with both hands in air devoutly raised,
He gracious Heaven for his deliverance praised.

XLV.

And pardoned Titta and his wife, for crimes
Heavy and numerous; and a vow he made
To go upon a pilgrimage betimes
To Rome, and visit every holy shade;
And meantime quit the camp, since ease sublimed
The mind for this high duty long delayed;
So the ram butts, and takes a backward course,
And then returns with greater rage and force.

XLVI.

But how he went to Rome, and what he did
In the Pope's chamber, such the honour deign'd;
And how a lodging he possessed unbid
Within a palace; how he there remained;
And after, how (no act of his was hid)
He by his own great bravery obtained
A new estate in Turkey; I opine,
These must be sung by worthier pen than mine.

XLVII.

For I'm not gifted with high sounding phrase,
Fit for such glorious themes; I therefore turn
To Titta, who, amidst the encampment strays,
Having put off his armour, proudly and stern,
And boasting of his feat, beyond all praise,
A deed, a glory, 'twas *his* fate to earn;
And now he finds the wound the Count had got
Had disappeared in searching for the spot.

XLVIII.

As a balloon well filled with wind, on high
 Majestic sails through heaven's ethereal plain ;
 If but a point should pierce it in the sky,
 Flaccid it falls, exhausted ; flat again ;
 So the proud Roman, in whose haughty eye
 Immortal honours shone, and vast disdain ;
 Lost all his windy pride when this he heard,
 And like a rat, half drowned in oil appeared.

XLIX.

Not so his second ; he was shrewd and clever,
 And thus consoled him : “ In these days, my Tit !
 “ None are thought brave, but those who, boasting ever,
 “ Talk of themselves, and puff their deeds and wit ;
 “ If conquered, and as dead, (who's the deceiver !)
 “ The Count was carried to his tent, 'tis fit
 “ That we should so report the facts to all,
 “ Within, and out of camp, both great and small.

L.

“ For thee it is enough, he was o'erthrown,
 “ By the first stroke, and if he does not die,
 “ Why, who desired it ? 'twas thy wish alone
 “ To be the conqueror, and be rated high ;
 “ Let Fame pursue its course, to thy renown
 “ It still redounds—if true, or but a lie ;
 “ And thou shalt be immortalized in verse,
 “ For Fulvio Testi shall thy deeds rehearse. ⁽⁵⁾

LI.

“ Fulvio is very hostile to the Count,
“ And will thy acts in love and arms declare ;
“ The beaming beauties, and the charms recount,
“ Of thy sweet idol, thy devoted fair !
“ The pawns and mortgages of great amount,
“ That thou hast given, so generously, for her ;
“ The vineyards, villages of various size,
“ That it has cost thee courting her bright eyes.

LII.

“ What pure contentment, what supreme delight
“ To lovers, gazing on the lucid blue
“ Of eyes enamoured ; even in beggar’s plight,
“ Enjoying beauty’s treasure ever new ;
“ Cupid is by the ancients (they were right)
“ Painted, unclothed, and, with a moral view ,
“ For he brings all who serve him to distress,
“ And makes them only thirst for nakedness.

LIII.

“ Amidst thy fond amours he will resound
“ Thy deeds in this great struggle, and thy worth ;
“ And with such strains, as welcome the renown’d,
“ Render eterne thy memory on earth ;
“ Already I see Fame the world around,
“ Trumpeting thy exploits and glory forth ;
“ And with thine own strong hand against the Pope,
“ Unfold rebellion’s standard, full of hope.”

LIV.

Thus reasoned Tuscanella, laughing loud,
And Titta laughed in concert—not so high,
For still the poison in his vitals glowed,
Not knowing how to cover such a lie.
Musing awhile, and seeing neither mode,
Nor poor excuse—to save his credit by,
Resolved the Count should have a murderous doom,
Just to confirm the story sent to Rome.

LV.

Equipped in coat of mail, and at his side
A sword, he went to find his victim out ;
The Count at St. Ambrozio's had applied,
And with the priests was talking, so, in doubt,
Titta sent in a message, and thus tried
To bring the meeting, he desired, about ;
The wary Count made ready his cross-bow,
And from an upper window looked below ;

LVI.

And asked the stranger's wishes : Titta said
He wished him to come down,—the Count excused
Himself, and knowing he had nought to dread,
(The door being firmly shut) he unconfused,
Observed : “ If you have business in your head,
“ Tell it, or come up stairs !” Titta refused,
And most indignantly himself revealed,
And on the Count a thousand curses pealed.

LVII.

But well the Count retorted with a smile :

- “ Thou art a man most despicably base ;
“ To keep thy anger a whole day is vile,
“ I, with my armour put off mine ; the place
“ To show thy valour in, if void of guile,
“ Cannot be here,—pray have a little grace ;
“ I gave thee proof in battle of my might,
“ And I have met thee too in single fight.

LVIII.

- “ When I was wrathful and in arms, you should
“ Have taken your revenge, but, Titta ! now
“ Your labour’s vain, I am not in that mood,
“ To hear the whimsies of a madman ; go !
“ And when you’re sound in brain, of temperate blood,
“ Return, and you’ll agree with me I know ;
“ I’ve nothing here to give you, that is plain,
“ So take a nap, and we’ll converse again.”

LIX.

Titta replied :—“ Goat, poltroon, come away ;

- “ Come out, I’ll teach thee a good lesson, I.”
The Count to this had not a word to say,
But, in the end, his wrath grew fierce and high,
And with an arrow, half resolved to slay,
Struck him between the kidney part and thigh,
So dreadfully, he laid him quivering flat,
And jumped out of the window after that,

LX.

Roaring: "Thou liest i'th' throat, vile Roman, thou
"Abandoned wretch, spy, traitor, as thou art!"
Titta feels darkness deepening o'er his brow
And scarcely hears a word, so keen the smart;
But the by-standers interfere, and now
Rush in between, the combatants to part;
And lead poor Titta to his tent, bent double—
With sharp lumbago, and in desperate trouble.

LXI.

There Tuscanella flouted him,¹ because
Instead of lifting up his hands in prayer
To heaven against his rival, he would pause
And entertain wild whims, as light as air,
To murder him; and this against the laws;
He had incensed him other front to bear,
And from a harmless, toothless frog, had changed
Him to a tiger fierce, and thus was he revenged.

LXII.

He said: "My friend! if victory you despise,
"What say you when from you she takes her flight?
"He who goes seeking quarrels, as a prize,
"Knows not that Madame Fortune's wings are light."
Titta upon the earth now fixed his eyes
Pensive and speechless, a most luckless knight.
But it is time to take another tone,
And sing the deeds by powerful armies done.

NOTES TO THE ELEVENTH CANTO.

1.

*And therefore calls him traitor, and "He lies,"
Adds the fierce knight, "If he the fact denies."*

Stanza iii.

The lie is the great inciter to a duel. The point of honour consists in giving the lie. We may, says the commentator, accuse a man of licentiousness, of drunkenness, of blasphemy, without incurring resentment, but if we tell our adversary he *lies*, it is an affront which can only be washed out in blood.

2.

The barber and the sexton of Ambristans.

Stanza xiii.

Ambristans, properly Saint Ambrogio, about three miles from Modena, which the poet has made the scene of the duel. At this place there was formerly a stone bridge which united both banks of the Panaro. This bridge is mentioned in canto i. stanza xxxv. when speaking of Radaldo Ganaceti.

3.

And Florence.

Stanza xvi.

The text says *Citta del fiore*, the city of flowers, by which name Florence is known.

Line 2. This plume is probably the chaplet spoken of in the first stanza of this canto—especially as it is to be left to Signor de Cornoraglia.

4.

Wine has more power than kings, or armies tyrant-led.

Stanza xxiv.

Adverting to Horace, *Ad Amphoram*.

Tu spem reducis mentibus anxiis

Viresque; et addis cornua pauperi.

Post te neque iratos trementi

Regum apices, neque militum arma, &c.

Lib. iii. Ode xxi.

Hope, by thee, fair fugitive!

Bids the wretched strive to live;

To the beggar you dispense

Heart and brow of confidence;

Warmed by thee, he scorns to fear

Tyrant's frown or soldier's spear.

Francis.

5.

For Fulvio Testi shall thy deeds rehearse,

Stanza l.

The Count D. Fulvio Testi of Modena was a knight of the order of St. Jago, celebrated as a poet, and the particular friend of Tassoni. He was secretary to the first Duke of Modena.

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO TWELFTH.

ARGUMENT

*The truce is done—the victory won nor lost,
The Pope to Lombardy a legate sends ;
Sprang on upon the bridge assumes his post,
And, tumbled in the stream, his struggle ends ;
The Bolognese are routed to their cost,
And every heart to softer feelings bends ;
The legate checks the evils widely spread,
And peace at last on equal terms is made.*

LA SECCHIA RAPITA;

OR,

THE RAPE OF THE BUCKET.

CANTO TWELFTH.

I.

THE scenes of war had lost their bloom and vigour ;
The Bolognese were asking for supplies ;
The Pope gave nothing but, to make a figure,
Indulgences for altars, which was wise ;
But Ezzelin opposed his schemes with vigour,
And poured in succours to his enemies ;
Then ceased he to be deaf to exhortation,
And to his nuncio wrote to seek accommodation.

II.

As legate, he dispatched the Cardinal
Messer Ottaviano, Ubaldine ; ⁽¹⁾
A man of learning, and of wit, withal,
An equal friend to Guelph and Ghibelline ;
To him the sword, and ensign pastoral
He gave, that he with thunders divine,
And with th' Italian armies, might oppose
All enemies to peace, as mortal foes.

III.

The legate soon departed ; numerous, gay,
And beautiful his retinue appeared ;
Meantime the truce being done, without delay
The fighting was resumed, the clangor heard ;
The warriors dauntless urged their desperate way
To gain the bridge, and fame to life preferred ;
So furiously they fought both night and day,
The flower of them was nearly swept away.

IV.

Of all the days St. Matthew's was the day,
The highest honoured by the powers at war ;
For so tremendous was the smoking fray,
The river ran with blood. Perinto there ⁽²⁾
And Periteo, with prodigious sway,
Brandished their swords ; and with an equal share
Of wonderous strength, upon the other side,
Renoppia flung her darts, and well her skill applied

V.

A neighbouring tower, in arms she had ascended,
The steeple of St. Ambrose was the place ;
And she took with her, to be well attended,
Celind and Semidèa, full of grace ;
The fatal bow the haughty woman bended,
But would not wound the infamous and base ;
The life of none but brave men she attempted,
And full five times her rattling quiver emptied

VI.

Paride Grassi, Signor Bianchini,
Fell on the bridge, and Alfeo Erculani
Upon the river, Alfier Lambertini,
Pompeo Marsigli, Cosmo Isolani,
Lapo Bianchetti, Romulo Angelini,
Gabrio Caprar, and Barnaba Lignani,
Were all transfixed, and with them two *cognati*,
Fulgriò Cosp, and Lambertuccio Grati.

VII.

At Petron Sampier, who before the bridge
Made way for the Crocettans, to her car
Celinda drew her bow-string, like a wedge
The dart went through his forehead; fighting near
Was Semidea; she pierced the gullet's edge
Of Beccatelli, who with sword or spear
Had Borghi and Colombo death-ward sped;
And plumped him in the stream, a lump of lead.

VIII.

Preti Girolamo was also wounded, ⁽³⁾
A poet worthy of immortal praise;
At court some fifteen years, where pomp abounded,
But at a time when flowers (what glorious days)
Never smelled sweet; a ruff his neck surrounded,
His dress all silk, adorned in different ways
With party coloured gold,—thence, at first view,
Renoppia marked the fop, and instant twanged her yew.

IX.

Between the neck and ruff-band went the dart,
And slightly passed beneath the tender skin;
He felt his cheek grow pale, and faint his heart,
For he imagined it was deeper in;
A mortal blow; so sensible the part,
His anxious mind, his agitated mien,
Had sunk his courage, and instead of taking
Revenge, he ran to dress his wound still aching.

X.

However, he excused himself, and said,
“ ’Tis wrong to fight with ladies!” to the people;
“ Much more against so beautiful a maid,
“ Who takes her lofty station on a steeple.”
Meantime by Semidea in death was laid
Upon the bridge’s verge old Andrea Cepil,
Who had that very morning killed a friar;
The bolt of heaven is sudden in its ire.

XI.

And if the deepening night had not concealed
The golden sun with his o’ershadowing wing,
Amazing deeds had signalized the field,
That would have roused the first of bards to sing;
Tasso had not his epic tale revealed;
And Bracciolino’s Ligno Santo-ing,
Marino’s sweet Adonis, and the chanting
Of Ariost’s Orlando, had been wanting.

XII.

Meanwhile the legate entered Genoa's gates ;

The nuncio from Bologna to him wrote
That he would meet him (if it pleased the fates)

Before the walls of Modena he sought ;

But he who knew the politics of states,

Perfectly knew that majesty is nought,
Unarmed with power, and therefore, to be strong,
Recruited soldiers as he went along.

XIII.

The Pope already with the Genoese

To borrow half a million had agreed ;

So that he had the means with greatest ease

To gather all the troops the case might need ;

But running here and there, he by degrees

Strayed from the usual route o'er vale and mead,

Till with a large and honourable force

He in Solera's pastures stopped his course.⁽¹⁾

XIV.

Fatigued with travel, weary with the heat,

Beneath a shade he sits him down to rest ;

And there the nuncio he expects to meet,

For he to him despatches had address ;

Meantime his servants feel disposed to eat,

And various victuals on the banks are dressed ;

And there he takes his spurs off on the green,

And midst his friends enjoys the banquet-scene.

XV.

The banquet done he, thoughtful, sat and played
With fennel stalks, till a backgammon-board
And cards were formally before him laid ;
Of cash he took a handful from his hoard ;
And Pietro Bardi, and del Nero made
The party—each for what they could afford ;
And the Count Ele, and Monsignor Bandino,
Played in a different corner at cassino.

XVI.

One hour and half he gambled—then in haste
He called his prelates on a short excursion ;
And soon the jumping grasshoppers they chased,
Amidst the herbs and grass for their diversion :
Thus passed the hours, according to their taste,
Waiting the coming of the nuncio's person ;
When lo ! a troop of men and beasts, in view,
Disturbed that pleasing sport, so beautiful and new.

XVII.

These were a number of ambassadors
From Modena dispatched, him to invite ;
With coaches, mules, and carts, and sundry stores,
And men of rank to do the honours right ;
Though INNOCENT had long despised their powers,
And given them no occasion of delight ;
The Modenese being at that holy court
Excluded from all posts, even of the meanest sort.

XVIII.

'Twas not that any could be charged with treason,⁽⁵⁾
In serving the Eternal City, no ;
But 'twas because they had through every season
Kept faith with Cæsar, then the church's foe ;
And that which might afford sufficient reason
To honour them, whence recompense should flow,
For constancy and valour, served to inflame
The heart with sharpest hatred of their name.

XIX.

Now to the legate speedful they had brought
Refreshments both for relish and support ;
Of Trebbian rich a quarter of a *botte*,
Six cannisters of puddings, long and short ;
A measure, full a chaldron, they had got ⁽⁶⁾
Of savoury wine cakes, never seen at court ;
And to excite the stomach's greedy passages,
Forty-five pounds of most delicious sausages.

XX.

The legate thanks them, and the stores dividing
Among his train, accepts the invitation ;
And now in leather boots and great coat riding,
The nuncio comes, and gives full information
Touching their views, for every point providing ;
And now into the city the legation
Proceeds ; the city pays it every honour
To show the Pope had been too hard upon her.

XXI.

The truce renewed—the council all proceeded
Beyond the city, even the ladies went
A mile towards the river, though not needed,
To pay the legate special compliment ;
To him at once the castle was conceded,
Hung with red damask, rich in ornament ;
Prizes were run for, shows amused the sight,
And there was masking, morning, noon, and night.

XXII.

To the great hall, upon the following day,
The nuncio calls the senate ; there they throng,
And there with pomp the legate takes his way,
Blessing the people as he goes along ;
Under a canopy, with gold-work gay,
His chair is placed, well raised, the crowd among :
And then begins with grave, reproachful speeches,
Addressed to those old men with large loose breeches.

XXIII.

“ The pope, the sovereign of the universe,
“ And of the flock of God pastor and sire,
“ Has seen, ’midst cares which through his bosom pierce,
“ From trifling spark, arise this mighty fire ;
“ And for the common good, to strife averse,
“ Inspired by heavenly love, and fond desire,
“ Sends to you peace, refuse ye what is given ?
“ He then denounces war in earth and heaven.

XXIV.

- “ What now I say, I’d say it to your foes ;
“ For a just father is the pope to all !
“ And though your late and present conduct shows
“ That you, like rebels, wish the church’s fall !
“ And with the impious Frederic friendly close,
“ And join him with your squadrons at his call ;
“ He does not wish that any act, or crime,
“ Should be remembered at the present time.

XXV.

- “ He sends me to negotiate a peace,
“ On fair conditions ; and I’ve his commands
“ Within a month his legions to increase,
“ And form ten thousand cavalry, in bands,
“ To punish those who, influenced by caprice,
“ Or hate, dispute the ground on which he stands :
“ On Genoa I have drafts, I have them here !
“ And thirty companies are also near.

XXVI.

- “ The king of France has promised to provide
“ Twelve thousand foot, within a month or two ;
“ So what more aid can we require beside ?
“ The Bolognese are just as bad as you,
“ In carrying on this war ; though sanctified,
“ God’s money might be better spent ’tis true ;
“ Better, the pope well knows than building towers
“ To his great name, mere smoke, to minds like ours !”

XXVII.

Upon the bench the senior of that day,
Was Jacopo Mirandola, an old ⁽⁷⁾
And open foe to Rome's despotic sway,
Ferocious, prompt, and turbulent, and bold;
This statesman, never dubious what to say,
The Roman legate his opinion told,
And, in his high authority arrayed,
Thus, from the chair he sat on, sharply said :

XXVIII.

“ The Pope is Pope, and we are wretches, born
“ Solely to suffer hardship, pain, disgrace ;
“ Therefore, by him we of our rights are shorn,
“ And only equal to the Jewish race ;
“ If us of coldness you suspect, and scorn,
“ Your want of heart has brought us to this case ;
“ But if of too much warmth—must I declare it ?
“ 'Tis that *your* frozen feelings cannot bear it.

XXIX.

“ Among God's people we're alone debarred
“ The enjoyment of the goods by others left ;
“ And even of hope, indulgence, or reward,
“ In the paternal heritage, bereft ;
“ Men from the poles receive from you regard,
“ And courteous conduct, freely as a gift ;
“ Whilst we, from common kindness exempt,
“ Are treated with ineffable contempt.

XXX.

- “ If shepherds turn to wolves, lambs will become
“ Wild dogs, for outrages are sure the worst,
“ Inflicted by the very person whom
“ We long have loved, and would love on, as erst ;
“ Frederic conserves our liberties, not Rome,
“ And hence our means are his, his interest first.
“ He treats us with kind heart and equal laws,
“ And we are faithful to his sacred cause.

XXXI.

- “ Nor ought less fervent praise be given to us,
“ For keeping pure our ancient liberty ;
“ Than unto others for their tyrannous
“ Invasions and deceptions ; this, say I,
“ To him whom it concerns ; I speak not thus
“ To you, for if his holy majesty,
“ With zeal paternal for a peace has striven,
“ We ought to lift our thankful hands to heaven.

XXXII.

- “ And yet there is no proof of this intent,
“ In sending that same corps of Perugines ;
“ And this Monsignor, in his element,
“ Like Jove, keeps thundering at the Ghibellines ;
“ Therefore, if love and charity be meant,
“ If God's own holy word his heart inclines,
“ Let the Pope fill the country round with grace,
“ And only fight against the pagan race.

XXXIII.

- “ For we are all obedience, and revere
“ His holy thoughts;—whatever he desires
“ We grant, and in your judgment without fear
“ Place all that fullest confidence requires;
“ Only preserve our honour, fresh and clear,
“ Do as you please; as sons of worthy sires,
“ We must not seem to be among mankind,
“ As bastard-born—to scorn and jeers consigned.

XXXIV.

- “ For if the time arrives, when we again
“ Shall want the arms you make us now lay down;
“ If ever *you* call for them to maintain
“ Your rights in African, or Syrian town;
“ They’ll follow you across the angry main, [brown;
“ They’ll follow you through deserts parched and
“ They will be first to penetrate the straits
“ Which lead to honour, and where glory waits.”

XXXV.

Here ceased Mirandola, and then uprose

- The senate roaring out, “ peace, peace!” To them
The pastor said discreetly: “ Peace, repose,
“ Peace be it, if it please you, peace (*a-hem*;)”
“ Your city must be worthy of what flows
“ From peace, that treasure, richer than a gem
“ Nor can the Germans interrupt its way.
“ For they are in confusion and dismay.

XXXVI.

“ It was against the Germans and not you
“ The pope sent forth the Perugines, indeed !
“ For if you'd not been aided by that crew,
“ So many men had not been doomed to bleed ;
“ Now God upon the wound a healing dew
“ Has poured, a just reward he has decreed ;
“ Be more devout, less arrogant in feeling,
“ And keep the waggon-road of honest dealing.”

XXXVII.

Ending his speech, he rises on his feet,
Saluting all the knights and ladies gay ;
Then calls the elders, and in converse sweet,
Communicates what he has got to say ;
Two days the Modenese the legate greet
With joust and feast, and music, song, and play ;
Then goes he to Bologna by appointment.
To give the itch a crowning rub of ointment.

XXXVIII.

The city gave him thirty shields ; a chest ⁽⁸⁾
Of handsome masks ; two loads of Garvel pears ;
And fifty fine spongata-cakes, the best ;
And sausages a hundred, packed in squares ;
Of Carpi mustard, exquisite to taste,
They nobly gave him two capacious jars ;
Two cypress branches, twisted like a scroll ;
And thirty pounds of truffles crowned the whole.

XXXIX.

He was escorted by a thousand horse,
From out the city to the neighbouring banks;
Where he descried the other martial force,
The bray of trumpets echoing through the ranks;
The bridge he gained, and passed the river's course;
The Bolognese with loud acclaim, and thanks,
Received him, and as evening gloomed the sky
He reached the city, full of dignity.

XL.

The following day, as an amusing sight,
They showed him all the spoils for which they'd fought;
Prisoners, and shields, and standards—armour bright,
And vauntingly the king was also brought;
Then did the regiment, with proud delight, ⁽⁹⁾
Fling from the window a boiled pig—and vote
That every year the same thing should be done,
To mark the day the victory was won.

XLI.

The legate then made^d known his embassy,
In public council; but he was not heard
With that attention he desired to be;
At the commencement they had all inferred,
That this sharp contest could not possibly
Close, each having equal honour. In a word,
They wanted back the Bucket, any how;
And giving up the king would never do.

XLII.

The legate then suggests the middle course,—

That, keeping still the king a prisoner,
They should give up all other claims (no worse)
To the Pope's arbitration. All demur,
Deaf to persuasion, deaf to reason's force,
Nor can he one from his opinion stir.
“Then,” said he, as he wrathfully arose,
“Our friends are more mistrustful than our foes.

XLIII.

“Now you shall see the dreadful consequence
“Of scorning Papal power!” This briefly said,
Not only did he quit with confidence,
That splendid hall, which courtly pomp displayed,
But from Bologna moved his court, and thence
Towards Finale, rapid progress made;
And in his anger told Paulucci then
To follow fast to Bonden with his men,

XLIV.

Where he would find, upon the coming day,
Aldobrandino's son, Azzo of Est;
And there, in his hereditary sway,
His Ferrarese domains to be replaced;
The legate got the brief upon his way,
Sent by the Pope, and now, with breathless haste,
He orders his battalions to be joined
By all the cavalry he'd left behind.

XLV.

Now Salinguerra, seeing danger lour,
Quickly the bridge abandoned ; and, returning
Fast to Ferrara, found, in evil hour,
The city nearly taken, but still burning
Was the Petronian's anger, none would cower,
All obstinate alike—obedience spurning,
Thinking it but a trifle to have lost
Both squadrons fighting bravely at their post.

XLVI.

The Modenese, upon the other side,
Adroitly by manœuvres well concealed,
From the Lucchese a loan had ratified ;
And troops embodied, veterans in the field ;
And being well with Paduans supplied,
Whose sly approach no sound of trump revealed,
They showed themselves unequal for defence,
To give their rash opponents confidence.

XLVII.

Meantime they are in secret preparation,
For an assault by night ; bridges they raise,
And fiery arrows frame for the occasion,
And dire combustibles, in different ways
Prepared, for various sorts of conflagration !
On land, and such as in the water blaze ;
Scythes formed like saws, machinery Satanic,
Enough to put an empire in a panic.

XLVIII.

Three days within the trenches, working hard,
The Paduans and Modenese remained;
And on the fourth, with arrogant regard,
Came from the Bolognese, and striding, gained
The bridge, as if that arduous pass to guard,
By coat of iron—harness well sustained,
A monstrous man,—of most enormous size,
Named Sprangon, fury reddening in his eyes. ⁽¹⁰⁾

XLIX.

He had a wooden morion on his head,
Grated with iron bars, and at his side
A German sword; and ponderous as lead;
A bill-hook in his hand; with scoffing pride,
He turned towards his enemies, and said,
“ O Pavans! ’ye with paunches tense and wide,
“ When will ye quit your dens, to feel my gripe!
“ Huge, shapeless masses of Trevisan tripe!

L.

“ Among so many poltroons, what! not one
“ With courage to come out, and bold enough
“ Me to confront, until the combat done,
“ One or the other comes victorious off!”
Boastful the towering giant spake, but none
Answered the pompous challenge with rebuff:
Short time elapsed, when on his ruin bent,
Out sprang a warrior from Antenor’s tent.

LI.

Limezio or Lemzoné he was named,

Short, fat, and thick, old fashioned in his look ;
A hood above his helmet, and there flamed

In his right hand a most terrific hook ;
And in his left a shield, of paper framed,

And lined with figs, which terribly he shook :
In short, with coat and breeches sewed together,
He seemed a mountebank of primest feather.

LII.

Sprangoné laughed, on seeing him so fine

Upon the bridge, and joked him as a show ;
Calling him Rodomonte's Aguzzine,

Dirt of Orlando, harbinger of woe ;
Lemzoné said, with a sarcastic whine,

“ Odzookers, man ! what would'st thou say or do,

“ Base, ugly pig, if I should make thee quiver,

“ And send thee to the bottom of the river ?”

LIII.

Sprangon at these harsh words upraised his bill,

The boaster's eyes intending to divide ;

Lemzon opposed his paper targe with skill,

In which the weapon stuck, then he aside

Let go the targe, and, vengeance to fulfil,

Clinched with his hook the helm, where he had spied
The iron bars, and dragged him with such strength,
That he was tumbled on the bridge at length.

LIV.

Scarce had Sprangone's bottom touched the ground,
When he bounced up again, and brandished high
His bill, the targe upon it whirling round,
And struck Lemzoné on the back and thigh ;
Lemzoné raised his hook, and quickly found
That the blow fell not, where he fixed his eye ;
For aiming at the visor, down it glided,
And in a trice the breeches band divided.

LV.

Upon his hands and knees Lemzoné fell,
And with him dragged the breeches, which he caught,
By that strong hook, enough the foe to quell,
Such seemed at least the boasting warrior's thought ;
But by the blow the tattered targe was well
Cleared from the bill, which other feelings brought :
And hence Lemzoné fearful of a wound,
Jumped in an instant fiercely from the ground.

LVI.

Now Sprangon, who his legs was extricating,
Is tumbled from the bridge and pushed below ;
But as he falls, his vigour concentrating,
He grasps, and drags with him his cruel foe ;
Entangling limb with limb, but separating
As down into the gulph they struggling go ;
At once the waves inclose them ; loud the shores
Re-echo, as the whelming torrent roars.

LVII.

Lemzoné, less encumbered, and more light,
Blows off the foam, and lifts himself to see
How he may steer his arduous course aright,
Then swims towards his friends victoriously;
But huge Sprangoné, cheated of his might,
By tangled breeches and his panoply,
Remains engulphed, for hungry fish a prey
And an obstruction to the water-way.

LVIII.

Ramizo Zabarell, a cavalier
The noblest and the gentlest of that day;
But most disdainful, haughty, stern, severe,
When roused in desperate war, or duel-fray,
Came armed on horseback, cantering from the rear,
Soon as Sprangoné sunk beneath the spray,
And said, "Ye Bolognese! since ye have given
" One challenge, this is ours, to make us even.

LIX.

" To-morrow on this bridge I challenge ye
" To single combat! who accepts my call?
" With lance and sword to show decisively
" Which has most valour; if ye stand, or fall!"
Here Zabarella ceased, and then with glee
Loud acclamations quickly rose from all;
The challenge was received by every knight
Of that opposing army with delight.

LX.

It was the season when the nights are long,
And dark, inviting us to soft repose ;
When the o'ershadowed moon, unseen among
The sparkling stars of heaven, no light bestows ;
The Bolognese in their conceit so strong,
Proud of the high success which seemed to close
The war, securely slept to wait the hour
Ramizo promised to display his power.

LXI.

When hark ! “ To arms, to arms ! ” and from the east
Far to the south the war words echoing fly ;
“ To arms, to arms ! ” ring loudly in the west,
The banks reverberate, and resounds the sky ;
The drowsy trembling people from their rest
Start up, confused at that tremendous cry ;
And wander here and there about the fields,
Seeking in darkness, standards, arms, and shields.

LXII.

The Modenese had for a while been quiet,
Resolving to surprise the enemy ;
From various points they now begin to try it,
Surrounding all, that not a man may fly ;
To them it seemed, and no one could deny it,
That they'd grown heedless since their victory ;
And seizing the right time they gladly found
The foe in sleep and fancied safety drowned.

LXIII.

The captains emulous rushed on *al ponte*,

Where danger threatened most, and there was seen
The furious cavalier, Eurimedontè, ⁽¹¹⁾

Who with his horse shut up the passage clean;
With menacing and formidable front, he

Brandished his beaming sword, both hands between;
And knights and horses from the bank pell-mell
Into the stream, dead and dismembered, fell.

LXIV.

Petronio Casal's face was cut in two,

Right 'twixt the eyes, and stretching to the chest;
Gian Pietro Magnan, he indignant slew,

His hand was cut off, whilst the sword he pressed,
And his side opened, whence disdainful flew

The soul, for nothing could its flight arrest;
From the neck severed to the pectoral bone
Was Ridolf Paleotti, and o'erthrown.

LXV.

But of the common class he killed—a heap,

Which rose above the waters, and passed on;
The Paduans follow in a phalanx deep,
And leave the bridge where such exploits were done;
Then to the trenches they together sweep,
And now the work of ruin has begun.

The foe is reinforced, each nerve they strain,
Against the fierce assault, but all in vain;

LXVI.

For from the east in flank, the valiant knight
Gherardo comes, and Manfred from the west;
Death in their hands, and clothed with dreadful might
Reddening the sand with blood—with undepressed
Courage their squadrons hurry to the fight,
Upon the other banks, in silent quest
Of the incautious Bolognese; and, though
In darkness wrapt, they now attack the foe.

LXVII.

At once they in a hundred places fire
Their wooden bulwarks, and now upward rolls
The living flame in many a crackling spire;
The enemy shrink with terror in their souls;
The Modenese rush on with ardour dire,
Their whelming valour every check controls;
The Paduans, too, unheard-of feats display,
And vanquish all embattled in their way.

LXVIII.

Brave Varisonè,⁽¹²⁾ brother of Nantchiero,
After called Barisonè, rather pat,
Killed Urban at a stroke, and Berlinghiero
Dal Gesso, and Manganon Galerat:
He'd with him Franco, and the fierce Alviero,
And Don Stefano Rossi, who had that
Cognomen, having on that arduous day
Been red with blood, and fit for other fray.

LXIX.

Round the Bolognian Pretor still remained
All the prime warriors ; he despairing viewed
The horrid carnage which the field distained,
And, without power to check the streaming blood,
Passed to the north ; whilst they, by fear constrained,
Their course to Castelfranco's towers pursued,
And there took shelter ; there assembled all
The scattered troops within the abandoned wail.

LXX.

The Fanians and Cesenians, and the flower
Of proud Milan, were numbered with the slain ;
Of Ravennese and Forlivese no more
Than one in five saw Castelfranc again :
The waggon taken, full of slippery gore,
And of the ghastly dead was every plain ;
The soldiers' quarters, and the plunder lay,
To rapine and devouring flames a prey.

LXXI.

Back to the bridge no Modenese returned,
But all to Castelfranco bent their way ;
And soon the enemy saw, surprised, concerned,
Their tents not far off pitched in full array ;
Where the broad margins may be still discerned,
The noble trench of that immortal day ;
These mark the path, and must be noted ever,
Between the famous castle and the river.

LXXII.

Next day the Bolognese a trench erected

Beyond the walls, and, issuing from the gate,
No means to seem magnanimous neglected,

Armed, well equipped, and in a fighting state ;
But they remained till evening thus collected,

To show they would not budge a step, though late
Meanwhile with secret speed the Regiment
A courier to the cardinal had sent,

LXXIII.

Asking forgiveness for their folly, praying

For aid and counsel ; pledging free consent
To any terms, if he, their fears allaying,

From peril so extreme and imminent,
Would save them ; he, no sign of joy betraying

To see their humbled pride, their anger spent,
Appeared to grieve, but, pleased that they had got a
Defeat, returned to the city of the Potta.

LXXIV.

Assembled there in senate : “ Friends,” he said,

“ To you I come again, in faith the same

“ As when I left you lately, but afraid

“ That your great victories may allow no claim

“ In me for mercy ; you, report had made

“ Foes of the church, but peaceful is your aim,

“ And our old friends, grown haughty, yet forlorn,

“ Have changed their faith, and left us as in scorn.

LXXV.

“ Now God has punished their o’erbearing pride;
“ But as I’ve smoothed the path to victory
“ And taken half Perugia—and beside
“ Drawn Salinguerra from the camp; to me
“ Grant the decision not before denied.
“ Again I ask it, vowing faithfully
“ Your honour shall continue pure and fair,
“ For so I promise; so by heaven, I swear.”

LXXVI.

Mirandola then rose, and thus rejoined;—
“ Signor! my country neither cedes to power
“ From opposition, nor forgets the kind
“ Favours of Fortune in her prosperous hour;
“ The arbitration we before resigned
“ Is now confirmed—we only trust that your
“ Greatness of soul, in using it, may be
“ Equal to that which sets the enemy free.”

LXXVII.

The legate thanked the senators, and went
From Modena that day, and peace was made
Between the parties, to their own content,
In virtue of the contract he conveyed;
And then o’erjoyed he published the event
Upon the following day with great parade;
At Modena the Bucket still remained,
The Bolognese Sardinia’s king retained.

LXXVIII.

In short, the other prisoners were set free,
And here and there full liberty enjoyed,
And every region, state, and boundary,
Remained the same as formerly applied;
So ended this great war of chivalry,
And on ALL SAINTS' day,⁽¹³⁾ doubly sanctified,
Each, little anxious ever more to roam,
Joyful returned to eat his goose at home.

LXXIX.

Good people all! who with a merry face
Have been attentive to my wandering song,
This is a history true, replete with grace:
But ah! to me no tuneful notes belong;
How different had it been with power to trace
The Muses' haunts; had they inspired my tongue!
But since my aim was good, this credit give;
And he who reads it happy may he live.

NOTES TO THE TWELFTH CANTO.

1.

*As legate he dispatched the Cardinal
Messer Ottaviano.*

Stanza ii.

The Cardinal Ottaviano d'egli Ubaldini, Bishop of Bologna was the real negociator of the peace. He was made a Bishop in 1240, and in 1244 a Cardinal by Innocent IV.

2.

*Perinto there,
And Periteo.*

Stanza iv.

Perinto and Periteo, two noble brothers, the sons of Elia Malvezzi.

3.

Preti Girolamo.

Stanza viii.

Gerolamo Preti was secretary to the Prince Alfonzo of Este Duke of Modena.

There is said to be a meaning here which cannot be discovered. The line has probably no meaning beyond its obvious import, a corrupt court.

4.

He in Solera's pastures stopped his course.

Stanza xiii.

Solera is a castle distant from Modena seven miles. In its neighbourhood the meadow land is very extensive.

5.

'Twas not that any could be charged with treason.

Stanza xviii.

This stanza contains an ingenious equivocation.

6.

*A measure full a chaldron, they had got
Of savoury wine-cakes.*

Stanza xix.

These wine-cakes, are called *Sughi d'ava* in the original, and are composed of wine and flour.

7.

*Upon the bench the senior of that day
Was Jacopo Mirandola.*

Stanza xxvii.

The family of Mirandola is very ancient, and bitter enemies of priests, and of ecclesiastical immunities.

8.

*The city gave him thirty shields, a chest
Of handsome masks.*

Stanza xxxviii.

Modena seems to have been famed for its manufacture of beautiful masks. Doctor Giovanni Battista, author of the *Encide Travestita*, has commemorated the masks of Modena

in his poem entitled the *Franceide*, canto v. stanzas lvii. and lviii.

Modena invia, senza pur far dimora,
Maschere, mascherette, e mascheroni,
Fatti con sì bel cello—e con tel arte
Che parean, vive non di stracci, o carte.

E dato avrebbe ancor per tal rispetto
La Secchia, che stimavano un Tesoro,
Ma il gran Tassoni a immortalaria eletto
Cinta l'avea del trionfante alloro.
E datole in Parnasso alto ricerto
A la mensa d'Apollo in coppa d'oro.
Ove si serbi eternamente, e duri
Per maraviglia a i secoli futuri.

The Garavelle pears were famous in those days, but not now.

The *Spongata* is a composition of flour, biscuit, nuts, raisins, butter, sugar, &c.

In Tassoni's time the best mustard was prepared at Carpi.

9.

*Then did the Reggiment, with proud delight,
Fling from the window a boiled pig.*

Stanza xl.

It is a fact that annually on the morning of St. Bartholomew's day, the Bolognese, from the window of the Palazzo del Legato, throw to the people a boiled pig. A similar feast is celebrated by the Bolognese in commemoration of 1281, when they possessed themselves of Faenza.

19.

*A monstrous man, of most enormous size,
Named Sprangon, fury reddening in his eyes.*

Stanza xlviii.

Sprangon de la Palata.

11.

The furious cavalier, Eurimedonte.

Stanza lxiii.

This is the Eurimedonte spoken of in the 12th stanza of the 8th canto.

12.

Brave Farisonè.

Stanza lxviii.

Barizone da Vigonza was the founder of the Paduan family of that name.

13.

And on all Saints' Day.

Stanza lxxviii.

Boniface IV. in the 9th century, introduced the feast of All Saints into Italy, which was soon afterwards adopted into the other churches.

In Lombardy on All Saints' day many families used to regale on nothing but goose, especially the artizans and the lower orders of the people. This custom however is much less observed than formerly. A goose on Michaelmas day is almost universal throughout England. It is said that Queen Elizabeth was dining on goose when she received the news of the destruction of the Spanish Armada, and that she ever after dined on goose on the anniversary of that day.

THE END.

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* * * Owing to the Translator's absence from England during the Printing of the LA SECCHIA RAPITA, the following Errata require to be noticed :

VOL. I.

Page	Stanza	Line
18	47	7 for " He spoke, and without further pause," read, " He spoke, and striking without further pause."
50	51	4 for " io," read " to."
104	16	6 for " teinting," read " painting."

VOL. II.

Page	Stanzu	Line
8	17	5 for " inside," read " aside."
9	20	4 for " when," read " where."
10	21	7 for " bringing," read " buying."
34	4	8 for "Roared in Ferrarese," read "Roared out," &c.
38	17	7 for " his," read " is."
43	31	4 for " Roncale di," read " Roncaledi."
43	32	8 read " And other towns which flourish'd there in plenty."
58	75	3 & 4 should be " But the blind harper, mindful of his own, To shun the tempest, cunningly withdrew."
74	28	7 read " and with an aspect ever."
75	32	7 for " wrung," read " rung."
76	33	1 for " then," read " there."
77	36	1 for " plunged," read " plunge."
—	—	2 for " disappeared," read " disappear."
114	52	7 read " and all exclaiming—"
136	22	1 read " Count Miceno."
144	47	4 for " proudly," read " proud."
155	1	5 for " vigour," read " rigour."
168	40	5 read " Regiment."

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

I.

SOOHRAB, a Poem : freely translated from the original Persian of Firdousee, being a portion of the *Shahnamu* of that celebrated Poet; with copious Notes. Published under the sanction of the College of Fort William. *Calcutta*, 1814.

II.

THE FIRST CANTO OF RICCIARDETTO; a lively satirical Poem, in burlesque imitation of the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto. From the Italian of Nicolas Forteguerra. *Calcutta*, 1818.

III.

HATIM TA'EE, an old Romance in the Persian language; edited, revised, and published, with the approbation of the College Council, for the use of the Junior Students in the College of Fort William. 1818.

IV.

THE AUBID; an Eastern Tale. *London* printed. 1819.

V.

RICCIARDA; a Tragedy in Five Acts. From the Italian of Ugo Foscolo. *Calcutta*, 1823.

VI.

THE CITY OF PALACES, and other Poems. *Calcutta*, 1824.



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